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[redacted]

1739 | For Gentlemen's mrs

A

COMPLETE VINDICATION

OF THE

LICENSERS OF THE STAGE,

FROM THE

MALICIOUS AND SCANDALOUS ASPERSIONS

OF

MR. BROOKE,

AUTHOR OF GUSTAVUS VASA.

WITH A PROPOSAL FOR MAKING THE OFFICE OF LICENSER MORE EXTENSIVE AND EFFECTUAL.

BY AN IMPARTIAL HAND.*

IT is generally agreed by the writers of all parties' that few crimes are equal, in their degree of guilt, to that of calumniating a good and gentle, or defending a wicked and oppressive administration.

It is therefore with the utmost satisfaction of mind, that I reflect how often I have employed my pen in vindication of the present ministry, and their dependents and adherents, how often I have detected the specious fallacies of the advocates for independence, how often I have softened the obstinacy of patriotism, and how often triumphed over the clamour of opposition.

I have, indeed, observed but one set of men, upon whom all my arguments have been thrown away; which neither flattery can draw to compliance, nor threats reduce to submission; and who have, notwith-

* First printed in the Year 1739.

standing all expedients that either invention or experience could suggest, continued to exert their abilities in a vigorous and constant opposition of all our measures.

The unaccountable behaviour of these men, the enthusiastic resolution with which, after a hundred successive defeats, they still renewed their attacks; the spirit with which they continued to repeat their arguments in the Senate, though they found a majority determined to condemn them; and the inflexibility with which they rejected all offers of places and preferments, at last excited my curiosity so far, that I applied myself to enquire with great diligence into the real motives of their conduct, and to discover what principle it was that had force to inspire such unextinguishable zeal, and to animate such unwearied efforts.

For this reason I attempted to cultivate a nearer acquaintance with some of the chiefs of that party, and imagined that it would be necessary for some time to dissemble my sentiments, that I might learn theirs.

Dissimulation to a true politician is not difficult, and therefore I readily assumed the character of a proselyte; but found, that their principle of action was no other, than that which they make no scruple of avowing in the most public manner, notwithstanding the contempt and ridicule to which it every day exposes them, and the loss of those honours and profits from which it excludes them.

This wild passion, or principle, is a kind of fanaticism by which they distinguish those of their own

party, and which they look upon as a certain indication of a great mind. *We* have no name for it *at court;* but among themselves they term it by a kind of *cant-phrase,* A REGARD FOR POSTERITY.

This passion seems to predominate in all their conduct, to regulate every action of their lives, and sentiment of their minds; I have heard L——— and P—*, when they have made a vigorous opposition, or blasted the blossom of some ministerial scheme, cry out, in the height of their exultations, *This will deserve the thanks of posterity!* And when their adversaries, as it much more frequently falls out, have out-numbered and overthrown them, they will say with an air of revenge, and a kind of gloomy triumph, *Posterity will curse you for this.*

It is common among men under the influence of any kind of phrenzy, to believe that all the world has the same odd notions that disorder their own imaginations. Did these unhappy men, these deluded patriots, know how little we are concerned about posterity, they would never attempt to fright us with their curses, or tempt us to a neglect of our own interest by a prospect of their gratitude.

But so strong is their infatuation, that they seem to have forgotten even the primary law of self-preservation; for they sacrifice without scruple every flattering hope, every darling enjoyment, and every satisfaction of life, to this *ruling passion,* and appear in every step to consult not so much their own advantage, as that of *posterity.*

* Lyttelton and Pitt. E.

Strange delusion! that can confine all their thoughts to a race of men whom they neither know, nor can know; from whom nothing is to be feared, nor any thing expected; who cannot even bribe a special jury, nor have so much as a single ribband to bestow.

This fondness for posterity is a kind of madness which at Rome was once almost epidemical, and infected even the women and the children. It reigned there till the entire destruction of Carthage; after which it began to be less general, and in a few years afterwards a remedy was discovered, by which it was almost entirely extinguished.

In England it never prevailed in any such degree: some few of the ancient Barons seem indeed to have been disordered by it; but the contagion has been for the most part timely checked, and our ladies have been generally free.

But there has been in every age a set of men much admired and reverenced, who have affected to be always talking of posterity, and have laid out their lives upon the composition of poems, for the sake of being applauded by this imaginary generation.

The present poets I reckon amongst the most inexorable enemies of our most excellent ministry, and much doubt whether any method will effect the cure of a distemper, which in this class of men may be termed not an accidental disease, but a defect in their original frame and constitution.

Mr. Brooke, a name I mention with all the detestation suitable to my character, could not forbear discovering this depravity of his mind in his very pro-

logue, which is filled with sentiments so wild, and so much unheard of among those who frequent levees and courts, that I much doubt, whether the zealous licenser proceeded any further in his examination of his performance.

He might easily perceive that a man,

Who bade his moral beam through every age,

was too much a bigot to exploded notions, to compose a play which he could license without manifest hazard of his office, a hazard which no man would incur untainted with the love of posterity.

We cannot therefore wonder that an author, wholly possessed by this passion, should vent his resentment for the licenser's just refusal, in virulent advertisements, insolent complaints, and scurrilous assertions of his rights and privileges, and proceed in defiance of authority to solicit a subscription.

This temper, which I have been describing, is almost always complicated with ideas of the high prerogatives of human nature, of a sacred unalienable birthright, which no man has conferred upon us, and which neither kings can take, nor senates give away; which we may justly assert whenever and by whomsoever it is attacked, and which, if ever it should happen to be lost, we may take the first opportunity to recover.

The natural consequence of these chimeras is contempt of authority, and an irreverence for any superiority but what is founded upon merit; and their notions of merit are very peculiar, for it is among them no great proof of merit to be wealthy and powerful,

to wear a garter or a star, to command a regiment or a senate, to have the ear of the minister or of the king, or to possess any of those virtues and excellencies, which among us entitle a man to little less than worship and prostration.

We may therefore easily conceive that Mr. Brooke thought himself entitled to be importunate for a license, because, in his own opinion, he deserved one, and to complain thus loudly at the repulse he met with.

His complaints will have, I hope, but little weight with the public; since the opinions of the sect in which he is enlisted are exposed, and shewn to be evidently and demonstrably opposite to that system of subordination and dependence, to which we are indebted for the present tranquillity of the nation, and that chearfulness and readiness with which the two Houses concur in all our designs.

I shall, however, to silence him entirely, or at least to shew those of our party that he ought to be silent, consider singly every instance of hardship and oppression which he has dared to publish in the papers, and to publish in such a manner, that I hope no man will condemn me for want of candour in becoming an advocate for the ministry, if I can consider his advertisements as nothing less than AN APPEAL TO HIS COUNTRY.

Let me be forgiven if I cannot speak with temper of such insolence as this: is a man without title, pension, or place, to suspect the impartiality or the judgment of those who are entrusted with the administration of public affairs? Is he, when the law is

not strictly observed in regard to him, to think himself *aggrieved*, to tell his sentiments in print, assert his claim to better usage, and fly for redress to another tribunal?

If such practices are permitted, I will not venture to foretel the effects of them; the ministry may soon be convinced, that such sufferers will find compassion, and that it is safer not to bear hard upon them, than to allow them to complain.

The power of licensing in general being firmly established by an Act of Parliament, our poet has not attempted to call in question, but contents himself with censuring the manner in which it has been executed; so that I am not now engaged to assert the licenser's authority, but to defend his conduct.

The poet seems to think himself aggrieved, because the licenser kept his tragedy in his hands one and twenty days, whereas the law allows him to detain it only fourteen.

Where will the insolence of the malecontents end? Or how are such unreasonable expectations possibly to be satisfied? Was it ever known that a man exalted into a high station, dismissed a suppliant in the time limited by law? Ought not Mr. Brooke to think himself happy that his play was not detained longer? If he had been kept a year in suspense, what redress could he have obtained? Let the poets remember, when they appear before the licenser, or his deputy, that they stand at the tribunal from which there is no appeal permitted, and where nothing will so well become them as reverence and submission.

Mr. Brooke mentions in his preface his knowledge of the laws of his own country: had he extended his enquiries to the civil law, he could have found a full justification of the licenser's conduct, *Boni judicis est ampliare suam auctoritatem.*

If then it be *the business of a good judge to enlarge his authority*, was it not in the licenser the utmost clemency and forbearance, to extend fourteen days only to twenty-one?

I suppose this great man's inclination to perform at least this duty of a good judge, is not questioned by any, either of his friends or enemies. I may therefore venture to hope, that he will extend his power by proper degrees, and that I shall live to see a malecontent writer earnestly soliciting for the copy of a play, which he had delivered to the licenser twenty years before.

I waited, says he, *often on the licenser, and with the utmost importunity entreated an answer.* Let Mr. Brooke consider, whether that importunity was not a sufficient reason for the disappointment. Let him reflect how much more decent it had been to have waited the leisure of a great man, than to have pressed upon him with repeated petitions, and to have intruded upon those precious moments which he has dedicated to the service of his country.

Mr. Brooke was doubtless led into this improper manner of acting, by an erroneous notion that the grant of a license was not an act of favour, but of justice; a mistake into which he could not have fallen, but from a supine inattention to the design of the statute, which was only to bring poets into sub-

jection and dependence, not to encourage good writers, but to discourage all.

There lies no obligation upon the licenser to grant his sanction to a play, however excellent; nor can Mr. Brooke demand any reparation, whatever applause his performance may meet with.

Another grievance is, that the licenser assigned no reason for his refusal. This is a higher strain of insolence than any of the former. Is it for a poet to demand a licenser's reason for his proceedings? Is he not rather to acquiesce in the decision of authority, and conclude that there are reasons which he cannot comprehend?

Unhappy would it be for men in power, were they always obliged to publish the motives of their conduct. What is power but the liberty of acting without being accountable? The advocates for the Licensing Act have alleged, that the Lord Chamberlain has always had authority to prohibit the representation of a play for just reasons. Why then did we call in all our force to procure an act of parliament? Was it to enable him to do what he has always done? to confirm an authority which no man attempted to impair, or pretended to dispute? No certainly: our intention was to invest him with new privileges, and to empower him to do that *without* reason, which *with* reason he could do before.

We have found by long experience, that to lie under a necessity of assigning reasons, is very troublesome, and that many an excellent design has miscarried by the loss of time spent unnecessarily in examining reasons.

Always to call for reasons, and always to reject them, shews a strange degree of perverseness; yet such is the daily behaviour of our adversaries, who have never yet been satisfied with any reasons that have been offered by us.

They have made it their practice to demand once a-year the reasons for which we maintain a standing army.

One year we told them that it was necessary, because all the nations round us were involved in war; this had no effect upon them, and therefore resolving to do our utmost for their satisfaction, we told them the next year that it was necessary, because all the nations round us were at peace.

This reason finding no better reception than the other, we had recourse to our apprehensions of an invasion from the Pretender, of an insurrection in favour of *gin*, and of a general disaffection among the people.

But as they continue still impenetrable, and oblige us still to assign our annual reasons, we shall spare no endeavour to procure such as may be more satisfactory than any of the former.

The reason we once gave for building barracks was for fear of the plague, and we intend next year to propose the augmentation of our troops for fear of a famine.

The committee, by which the act for licensing the stage was drawn up, had too long known the inconvenience of giving reasons, and were too well acquainted with the characters of great men, to lay the Lord

Chamberlain, or his deputy, under any such tormenting obligation.

Yet lest Mr. Brooke should imagine that a license was refused him without just reasons, I shall condescend to treat him with more regard than he can reasonably expect, and point out such sentiments as not only justly exposed him to that refusal, but would have provoked any ministry less merciful than the present to have inflicted some heavier penalties upon him.

His prologue is filled with such insinuations as no friend of our excellent government can read without indignation and abhorrence, and cannot but be owned to be a proper introduction to such scenes, as seem designed to kindle in the audience a flame of opposition, patriotism, public spirit, and independency; that spirit which we have so long endeavoured to suppress, and which cannot be revived without the entire subversion of all our schemes.

The seditious poet, not content with making an open attack upon us, by declaring in plain terms, that he looks upon freedom as the only source of public happiness and national security, has endeavoured with subtlety, equal to his malice, to make us suspicious of our firmest friends, to infect our consultations with distrust, and to ruin us by disuniting us.

This indeed will not be easily effected; an union founded upon interest and cemented by dependence is naturally lasting; but confederacies which owe their rise to virtue or mere conformity of sentiments, are quickly dissolved, since no individual has any thing either to hope or fear for himself, and public

spirit is generally too weak to combat with private passions.

The poet has, however, attempted to weaken our combination by an artful and sly assertion, which, if suffered to remain unconfuted, may operate by degrees upon our minds in the days of leisure and retirement which are now approaching, and perhaps fill us with such surmises as may at least very much embarrass our affairs.

The law by which the Swedes justified their opposition to the encroachments of the King of Denmark, he not only calls

> Great Nature's law, the law within the breast,

but proceeds to tell us that it is

> ——Stamp'd by Heaven upon th' unletter'd mind.

By which he evidently intends to insinuate a maxim which is, I hope, as false as it is pernicious, that men are naturally fond of liberty till those unborn ideas and desires are effaced by literature.

The author, if he be not a man mewed up in his solitary study, and entirely unacquainted with the conduct of the present ministry, must know that we have hitherto acted upon different principles. We have always regarded *letters* as great obstructions to our scheme of subordination, and have therefore, when we have heard of any man remarkably *unlettered*, carefully noted him down as the most proper person for any employments of trust or honour, and considered him as a man in whom we could safely repose our most important secrets.

From among the uneducated and *unlettered* we have chosen not only our embassadors and other negotiators, but even our journalists and pamphleteers; nor have we had any reason to change our measures, or to repent of the confidence which we have placed in ignorance.

Are we now therefore to be told, that this law is

Stamp'd upon th' unletter'd mind?

Are we to suspect our placemen, our pensioners, our generals, our lawyers, our best friends in both Houses, all our adherents among the atheists and infidels, and our very gazetteers, clerks and court-pages, as friends to independency? Doubtless this is the tendency of his assertion, but we have known them too long to be thus imposed upon, the *unlettered* have been our warmest and most constant defenders, nor have we omitted any thing to deserve their favour, but have always endeavoured to raise their reputation, extend their influence, and encrease their number.

In his first act he abounds with sentiments very inconsistent with the ends for which the power of licensing was granted; to enumerate them all would be to transcribe a great part of his play, a task which I shall very willingly leave to others, who, though true friends to the government, are not inflamed with zeal so fiery and impatient as mine, and therefore do not feel the same emotions of rage and resentment at the sight of those infamous passages, in which venality and dependance are represented as mean in themselves, and productive of remorse and infelicity.

One line which ought, in my opinion, to be erased

from every copy by a special act of parliament, is mentioned by Anderson, as pronounced by the hero in his sleep,

O Sweden, O my country, yet I'll save thee.

This line I have reason to believe thrown out as a kind of a watch-word for the opposing faction, who, when they meet in their seditious assemblies, have been observed to lay their hands upon their breasts, and cry out with great vehemence of accent,

O B———*, O my country, yet I'll save thee.

In the second scene he endeavours to fix epithets of contempt upon those passions and desires which have been always found most useful to the ministry, and most opposite to the spirit of independency.

Base fear, the laziness of lust, gross appetites,
These are the ladders and the grov'ling foot-stool
From whence the tyrant rises———
Secure and scepter'd in the soul's servility
He has debauched the genius of our country
And rides triumphant, while her captive sons
Await his nod, the silken slaves of pleasure,
Or fetter'd in their fears.———

Thus is that decent submission to our superiors, and that proper awe of authority which we are taught in courts, termed *base fear* and the *servility of the soul.* Thus are those gaieties and enjoyments, those elegant amusements, and lulling pleasures which the followers of a court are blessed with, as the just re-

* Britain. E.

wards of their attendance and submission, degraded to *lust, grossness,* and *debauchery*. The author ought to be told, that courts are not to be mentioned with so little ceremony, and that though gallantries and amours are admitted there, it is almost treason to suppose them infected with debauchery or lust.

It is observable, that when this hateful writer has conceived any thought of an uncommon malignity, a thought which tends in a more particular manner to excite the love of liberty, animate the heat of patriotism, or degrade the majesty of kings, he takes care to put it in the mouth of his hero, that it may be more forcibly impressed upon his reader. Thus Gustavus, speaking of his tatters, cries out,

> ———Yes, my Arvida,
> Beyond the sweeping of the proudest train
> That shades a monarch's heel, I prize these weeds,
> For they are sacred to my country's freedom.

Here this abandoned son of liberty makes a full discovery of his execrable principles, the tatters of Gustavus, the usual dress of the assertors of these doctrines, are of more divinity, because they are sacred to freedom, than the sumptuous and magnificent robes of regality itself. Such sentiments are truly detestable, nor could any thing be an aggravation of the author's guilt, except his ludicrous manner of mentioning a monarch.

The *heel of a monarch*, or even the print of his *heel*, is a thing too venerable and sacred to be treated with such levity, and placed in contrast with rags and poverty. He, that will speak contemptuously of the

heel of a *monarch*, will, whenever he can with security, speak contemptuously of his head.

These are the most glaring passages which have occurred, in the perusal of the first pages; my indignation will not suffer me to proceed farther, and I think much better of the licenser, than to believe he went so far

In the few remarks which I have set down, the reader will easily observe, that I have strained no expression beyond its natural import, and have divested myself of all heat, partiality, and prejudice.

So far therefore is Mr. Brooke from having received any hard or unwarrantable treatment, that the licenser has only acted in pursuance of that law to which he owes his power, a law, which every admirer of the administration must own to be very necessary, and to have produced very salutary effects.

I am indeed surprised, that this great office is not drawn out into a longer series of deputations, since it might afford a gainful and reputable employment to a great number of the friends of the government; and I should think, instead of having immediate recourse to the deputy-licenser himself, it might be sufficient honour for any poet, except the laureat, to stand bareheaded in the presence of the deputy of the deputy's deputy in the nineteenth subordination.

Such a number cannot but be thought necessary, if we take into consideration the great work of drawing up an index *expurgatorius* to all the old plays; which is, I hope, already undertaken, or if it has been hitherto unhappily neglected, I take this opportunity to recommend.

The productions of our old poets are crowded with passages very unfit for the ears of an English audience, and which cannot be pronounced without irritating the minds of the people.

This censure I do not confine to those lines in which liberty, natural equality, wicked ministers, deluded kings, mean arts of negociation, venal senates, mercenary troops, oppressive officers, servile and exorbitant taxes, universal corruption, the luxuries of a court, the miseries of the people, the decline of trade, or the happiness of independency are directly mentioned. These are such glaring passages as cannot be suffered to pass without the most supine and criminal negligence. I hope the vigilance of the licensers will extend to all such speeches and soliloquies as tend to recommend the pleasures of virtue, the tranquillity of an uncorrupted head, and the satisfactions of conscious innocence; for though such strokes as these do not appear to a common eye to threaten any danger to the government, yet it is well known to more penetrating observers, that they have such consequences as cannot be too diligently obviated, or too cautiously avoided.

A man, who becomes once enamoured of the charms of virtue, is apt to be very little concerned about the acquisition of wealth or titles, and is therefore not easily induced to act in a manner contrary to his real sentiments, or to vote at the word of command; by contracting his desires, and regulating his appetites, he wants much less than other men, and every one versed in the arts of government can tell, that men are more easily influenced in proportion as they are more necessitous.

This is not the only reason why virtue should not receive too much countenance from a licensed stage; her admirers and followers are not only naturally independent, but learn such an uniform and consistent manner of speaking and acting, that they frequently by the mere force of artless honesty surmount all the obstacles which subtlety and politics can throw in their way, and obtain their ends in spite of the most profound and sagacious ministry.

Such then are the passages to be expunged by the licensers: in many parts indeed the speeches will be imperfect, and the action appear not regularly conducted, but the Poet Laureat may easily supply these vacuities, by inserting some of his own verses in praise of wealth, luxury, and venality.

But alas! all those pernicious sentiments which we shall banish from the stage, will be vented from the press, and more studiously read because they are prohibited.

I cannot but earnestly implore the friends of the government to leave no art untried by which we may hope to succeed in our design of extending the power of the licenser to the press, and of making it criminal to publish any thing without an *imprimatur*.

How much would this single law lighten the mighty burden of state affairs! With how much security might our ministers enjoy their honours, their places, their reputations, and their admirers, could they once suppress those malicious invectives which are at present so industriously propagated, and so eagerly read; could they hinder any arguments but their own from coming to the ears of the people, and stop effectually the voice of cavil and enquiry!

I cannot but indulge myself a little while by dwelling on this pleasing scene, and imagining those *halcyon-days*, in which no politics shall be read but those of the *Gazetteer*, nor any poetry but that of the Laureat; when we shall hear of nothing but the successful negociations of our ministers, and the great actions of ——

How much happier would this state be, than those perpetual jealousies and contentions which are inseparable from knowledge and liberty, and which have for many years kept this nation in perpetual commotions.

But these are times rather to be wished for than expected, for such is the nature of our unquiet countrymen, that if they are not admitted to the knowledge of affairs, they are always suspecting their governors of designs prejudicial to their interest; they have not the least notion of the pleasing tranquillity of ignorance, nor can be brought to imagine, that they are kept in the dark, lest too much light should hurt their eyes. They have long claimed a right of directing their superiors, and are exasperated at the least mention of secrets of state.

This temper makes them very readily encourage any writer or printer, who, at the hazard of his life or fortune, will give them any information: and while this humour prevails, there never will be wanting some daring adventurer who will write in defence of liberty, and some zealous or avaricious printer who will disperse his papers.

It has never yet been found that any power, however vigilant or despotic, has been able to prevent

the publication of seditious journals, ballads, essays, and dissertations; "Considerations on the present state of affairs," and "Enquiries into the conduct of the administration *."

Yet I must confess, that considering the success with which the present ministry has hitherto proceeded in their attempts to drive out of the world the old prejudices of patriotism and public spirit, I cannot but entertain some hopes, that what has been so often attempted by their predecessors, is reserved to be accomplished by their superior abilities.

If I might presume to advise them upon this great affair, I should dissuade them from any direct attempt upon the liberty of the press, which is the darling of the common people, and therefore cannot be attacked without immediate danger. They may proceed by a more sure and silent way, and attain the desired end without noise, detraction, or oppression.

There are scattered over this kingdom several little seminaries, in which the lower ranks of people, and the youngest sons of our nobility and gentry are taught, from their earliest infancy the pernicious arts of spelling and reading, which they afterwards continue to practise, very much to the disturbance of their own quiet, and the interruption of ministerial measures.

These seminaries may, by an act of parliament, be at once suppressed, and that our posterity be deprived of all means of reviving this corrupt method of educa-

* Titles of pamphlets published at this juncture. The former by Lord Lyttelton. See his works, vol I. E.

tion, it may be made felony to teach to read without a license from the Lord Chamberlain.

This expedient, which I hope will be carefully concealed from the vulgar, must infallibly answer the great end proposed by it, and set the power of the court not only above the insults of the poets, but in a short time above the necessity of providing against them. The licenser having his authority thus extended, will in time enjoy the title and the salary without the trouble of exercising his power, and the nation will rest at length in ignorance and peace.

PREFACE

TO THE

GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE,

1738.

THE usual design of Addresses of this sort is to implore the candour of the publick; we have always had the more pleasing province of returning thanks, and making our acknowledgments for the kind acceptance which our Monthly Collections have met with.

This, it seems, did not sufficiently appear from the numerous sale and repeated impressions of our books, which have at once exceeded our merit and our expectation: but have been still more plainly attested by the clamours, rage, and calumnies of our competitors, of whom we have seldom taken any notice, not only because it is cruelty to insult the depressed, and folly to engage with desperation, but because we consider all their outcries, menaces, and boasts, as nothing more than advertisements in our favour, being evidently drawn up with the bitterness of baffled malice and disappointed hope; and almost discovering, in plain terms, that the unhappy authors have seventy thousand London Magazines mouldering in their

warehouses, returned from all parts of the kingdom, unsold, unread, and disregarded.

Our obligations for the encouragement we have so long continued to receive, are so much the greater, as no artifices have been omitted to supplant us. Our adversaries cannot be denied the praise of industry: how far they can be celebrated for an honest industry we leave to the decision of the publick, and even of their brethren the booksellers, not including those whose advertisements they obliterated to paste their invectives in our book.

The success of the Gentleman's Magazine has given rise to almost twenty imitations of it, which are either all dead, or very little regarded by the world. Before we had published sixteen months, we met with such a general approbation, that a knot of enterprising geniuses, and sagacious inventors, assembled from all parts of the town, agreed with an unanimity natural to understandings of the same size to seize upon our whole plan, without changing even the Title. Some weak objections were indeed made by one of them against the design, as having an air of servility, dishonesty, and piracy; but it was concluded that all these imputations might be avoided by giving the picture of St. Paul's instead of St. John's gate: it was however thought indispensably necessary to add, printed in St. John's-street, though there was then no printing-house in that place.

That these plagiaries should, after having thus stolen their whole design from us, charge us with robbery, on any occasion, is a degree of impudence scarcely to be matched, and certainly entitles them

to the first rank among false heroes. We have therefore inserted their names* at length in our February Magazine, p. 61; being desirous that every man should enjoy the reputation he deserves.

Another attack has been made upon us by the author of COMMON SENSE, an adversary equally malicious as the former, and equally despicable. What were his views, or what his provocations, we know not, nor have thought him considerable enough to enquire. To make him any further answer would be to descend too low: but as he is one of those happy writers, who are best exposed by quoting their own words, we have given his elegant remarks in our Magazine for December, where the reader may entertain himself at his leisure with an agreeable mixture of scurrility and false grammar.

For the future we shall rarely offend him by adopting any of his performances, being unwilling to prolong the life of such pieces as deserve no other fate than to be hissed, torn, and forgotten. However, that the curiosity of our readers may not be disappointed, we shall, whenever we find him a little excelling himself, perhaps print his dissertations upon our blue covers, that they may be looked over, and stripped off, without disgracing our collection, or swelling our volumes.

* The names are thus inserted—" The *gay* and *learned* C. Ackers, of Swan Alley, printer; the *polite* and *generous* T. Cox, under the Royal Exchange; the *eloquent* and *courtly* J. Clark, of Duck Lane; and the *modest*, *civil*, and *judicious* T. Astley, of St. Paul's Church Yard, booksellers. — All these names appeared in the Title of the London Magazine, begun in 1732.

We are sorry that by inserting some of his essays, we have filled the head of this petty writer with idle chimeras of applause, laurels, and immortality, nor suspected the bad effect of our regard for him, till we saw in the Postscript to one of his papers a wild * prediction of the honours to be paid him by future ages. Should any mention of him be made, or his writings, by posterity, it will probably be in words like these: "In the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE are still preserved some essays under the specious and inviting title of *Common Sense*. How papers of so little value came to be rescued from the common lot of dulness, we are at this distance of time unable to conceive, but imagine that personal friendship prevailed with URBAN to admit them in opposition to his judgment. If this was the reason, he met afterwards with the treatment which all deserve who patronize stupidity; for the writer, instead of acknowledging his favours, complains of injustice, robbery, and mutilation; but complains in a style so barbarous and indecent, as sufficiently confutes his own calumnies."

* COMMON SENSE Journal, printed by Purser of White-Friers, March 11, 1738.

"I make no doubt but after some grave historian, three or four hundred years hence, has described the corruption, the baseness, and the flattery which men run into in these times, he will make the following observation:—In the year 1737, a certain unknown author published a writing under the title of *Common Sense:* this writing came out weekly in little detached essays, some of which are political, some moral, and others humorous. By the best judgment that can be formed of a work, the style and language of which is become so obsolete that it is scarce intelligible, it answers the title well," &c.

In this manner must this author expect to be mentioned.—But of him, and our other adversaries, we beg the reader's pardon for having said so much. We hope it will be remembered in our favour, that it is sometimes necessary to chastise insolence, and that there is a sort of men who cannot distinguish between forbearance and cowardice.

AN APPEAL TO THE PUBLICK.

FROM THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, MARCH 1739.

Men' moveat cimex Pantilius? aut crucier, quod
Vellicet absentem Demetrius? HOR.

Laudat, amat, cantat nostros mea Roma libellos,
Meque sinus omnes, me manus omnis habet.
Ecce rubet quidam, pallet, stupet, oscitat, odit.
Hoc volo, nunc nobis carmina nostra placent.
MARTIAL.

IT is plain from the conduct of writers of the first class, that they have esteemed it no derogation from their characters to defend themselves against the censures of ignorance, or the calumnies of envy.

It is not reasonable to suppose that they always judged their adversaries worthy of a formal confutation, but they concluded it not prudent to neglect the feeblest attacks; they knew that such men have often done hurt who had not abilities to do good; that the weakest hand, if not timely disarmed, may stab a hero in his sleep; that a worm, however small,

may destroy a fleet in the acorn; and that citadels, which have defied armies, have been blown up by rats.

In imitation of these great examples, we think it not absolutely needless to vindicate ourselves from the virulent aspersions of the CRAFTSMAN and COMMON SENSE, because their accusations, though entirely groundless, and without the least proof, are urged with an air of confidence, which the unwary may mistake for consciousness of truth.

In order to set the proceedings of these calumniators in a proper light, it is necessary to inform such of our readers as are unacquainted with the artifices of trade, that we originally incurred the displeasure of the greatest part of the booksellers by keeping this Magazine wholly in our own hands, without admitting any of that fraternity into a share of the property. For nothing is more criminal in the opinion of many of them, than for an author to enjoy more advantage from his own works than they are disposed to allow him. This is a principle so well established among them, that we can produce some who threatened printers with their highest displeasure for their having dared to print books for those that wrote them.

Hinc iræ, hinc odia.

This was the first ground of their animosity, which for some time proceeded no farther than private murmurs and petty discouragements. At length determining to be no longer debarred from a share in so beneficial a project, a knot of them combined to seize our whole plan; and, without the least attempt to

vary or improve it, began with the utmost vigour to print and circulate the LONDON MAGAZINE, with such success, that in a few years, while we were printing the fifth edition of some of our earliest numbers, they had *seventy thousand* of their books returned unsold upon their hands.

It was then time to exert their utmost efforts to stop our progress, and nothing was to be left unattempted that interest could suggest. It will be easily imagined that their influence among those of their own trade was greater than ours, and that their Collections were therefore more industriously propagated by their brethren; but this being the natural consequence of such a relation, and therefore excusable, is only mentioned to show the disadvantages against which we are obliged to struggle, and to convince the reader, that we who depend so entirely upon his approbation, shall omit nothing to deserve it.

They then had recourse to advertisements, in which they sometimes made faint attempts to be witty, and sometimes were content with being merely scurrilous; but finding that their attacks, while we had an opportunity of returning hostilities, generally procured them such treatment as very little contributed to their reputation, they came at last to a resolution of excluding us from the Newspapers in which they have any influence: by this means they can at present insult us with impunity, and without the least danger of confutation.

Their last, and indeed their most artful expedient, has been to hire and incite the weekly journalists against us. The first weak attempt was made by

the UNIVERSAL SPECTATOR, but this we took not the least notice of, as we did not imagine it would ever come to the knowledge of the publick.

Whether there was then a confederacy between this journal and COMMON SENSE's, as at present between COMMON SENSE and the CRAFTSMAN, or whether understandings of the same form receive at certain times the same impressions from the planets, I know not; but about that time war was likewise declared against us by the redoubted author of COMMON SENSE: an adversary not so much to be dreaded for his abilities as for the title of his paper, behind which he has the art of sheltering himself in perfect security. He defeats all his enemies by calling them "enemies to Common Sense," and silences the strongest objections and the clearest reasonings by assuring his readers that "they are contrary to Common Sense."

I must confess, to the immortal honour of this great writer, that I can remember but two instances of a genius able to use a few syllables to such great and so various purposes. One is, the old man in Shadwell, who seems, by long time and experience, to have attained to equal perfection with our author; for "when a young fellow began to prate and be pert," says he, "I silenced him with my old word, TACE is Latin for a candle."

The other, who seems yet more to resemble this writer, was one *Goodman*, a horse-stealer, who being asked, after having been found guilty by the jury, what he had to offer to prevent sentence of death from being passed upon him, did not attempt to extenuate his

crime, but entreated the judge to beware of hanging a *Good Man.*

This writer we thought, however injudiciously, worthy, not indeed of a reply, but of some correction, and in our Magazine for December 1738, and the preface to the Supplement, treated him in such a manner as he does not seem inclined to forget.

From that time, losing all patience, he has exhausted his stores of scurrility upon us; but our readers will find, upon consulting the passages abovementioned, that he has received too much provocation to be admitted as an impartial critic.

In our Magazine of January, p. 24, we made a remark upon the CRAFTSMAN, and in p. 3, dropped some general observations upon the weekly writers, by which we did not expect to make them more our friends. Nor, indeed, did we imagine that this would have inflamed *Caleb* to so high a degree. His resentment has risen so much above the provocation, that we cannot but impute it more to what he fears than what he has felt. He has seen the solecisms of his brother COMMON SENSE exposed, and remembers that—

——Tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet.

He imagines that he shall soon fall under the same censure, and is willing that our criticisms shall appear rather the effects of our resentment than our judgment.

For this reason, I suppose, (for I can find no other,) he has joined with COMMON SENSE to charge us with partiality, and to recommend the LONDON MAGAZINE as drawn up with less regard to interest

or party. A favour, which the authors of that collection have endeavoured to deserve from them by the most servile adulation.

But as we have a higher opinion of the candour of our readers, than to believe that they will condemn us without examination, or give up their right of judging for themselves, we are not unconcerned at this charge, though the most atrocious and malignant that can be brought against us. We entreat only to be compared with our rivals, in full confidence, that not only our innocence, but our superiority will appear *.

* These prefaces may suffice as specimens of the aid Dr. Johnson afforded to the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, as soon as he had formed a connexion with its proprietor, Mr. Cave. More might be given, but more are not necessary, as specimens of his early style on topics which he probably did not reflect upon with much pleasure. Yet notwithstanding these bitter sarcasms on the unfortunate rivals of Mr. Cave's undertaking, he became himself one of those in 1756, when he commenced editor of the LITERARY MAGAZINE; a publication which struggled in vain, for about two years, against the firmly established popularity of the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE. Johnson, being principal editor and manager of this LITERARY MAGAZINE, was, for nearly a year, indefatigable in his contributions. The best of these are now inserted in the present edition of his works; and for a more particular account of his connexion with the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, we may refer to the "Preface" of the late elaborate INDEX to that work, published by Mr. Nichols. C.

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE CASE OF

DR. T[RAPP]'S SERMONS*,

ABRIDGED BY MR. CAVE, 1739.

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1. THAT the copy of a book is the property of the author, and that he may, by sale or otherwise, transfer that property to another, who has a right to be protected in the possession of that property, so transferred, is not to be denied.

2. That the complainants may be lawfully invested with the property of this copy, is likewise granted.

3. But the complainants have mistaken the nature of this property; and, in consequence of their mistake, have supposed it to be invaded by an act, in itself

* Dr. Trapp, it will be recollected, was a popular preacher; and about the year 1739, when Methodism might be said to be in its infancy, preached Four Sermons "On the Nature, Folly, Sin, and Danger, of being righteous over-much;" which were published by Austen and Gilliver, and had an extensive sale. Mr. Cave, ever ready to oblige his readers with temporary subjects, took an extract from them, and promised a *continuation*, which never appeared; so that it was either stopped by a prosecution, or made up by other means. On all difficult occasions Johnson was Cave's oracle. And the paper now before us was certainly written on *that* occasion. Gent. Mag. July 1787.

legal, and justifiable by an uninterrupted series of precedents, from the first establishment of printing among us, down to the present time.

4. He that purchases the copy of a book, purchases the sole right of printing it, and of vending the books printed according to it; but has no right to add to it, or take from it, without the author's consent, who still preserves such a right in it, as follows from the right every man has to preserve his own reputation.

5. Every single book, so sold by the proprietor, becomes the property of the buyer, who purchases with the book the right of making such use of it as he shall think most convenient, either for his own improvement or amusement, or the benefit or entertainment of mankind.

6. This right the reader of a book may use many ways to the disadvantage both of the author and the proprietor, which yet they have not any right to complain of, because the author when he wrote, and the proprietor when he purchased, the copy, knew, or ought to have known, that the one wrote, and the other purchased, under the hazard of such treatment from the buyer and reader, and without any security from the bad consequences of that treatment except the excellence of the book.

7. Reputation and property are of different kinds; one kind of each is more necessary to be secured by the law than another, and the law has provided more effectually for its defence. My character as a man, a subject, or a trader, is under the protection of the law; but my reputation as an author is at the mercy of the reader, who lies under no other obligations to

do me justice than those of religion and morality. If a man calls me rebel or bankrupt, I may prosecute and punish him; but, if a man calls me ideot or plagiary, I have no remedy, since, by selling him the book, I admit his privilege of judging, and declaring his judgment, and can appeal only to other readers, if I think myself injured.

8. In different characters we are more or less protected; to hiss a pleader at the bar would perhaps be deemed illegal and punishable, but to hiss a dramatic writer is justifiable by custom.

9. What is here said of the writer, extends itself naturally to the purchaser of a copy, since the one seldom suffers without the other.

10. By these liberties it is obvious, that authors and proprietors may often suffer, and sometimes unjustly: but as these liberties are encouraged and allowed for the same reason with writing itself, for the discovery and propagation of truth, though, like other human goods, they have their alloys and ill-consequences; yet, as their advantages abundantly preponderate, they have never yet been abolished or restrained.

11. Thus every book, when it falls into the hands of the reader. is liable to be examined, confuted, censured, translated, and *abridged;* any of which may destroy the credit of the author, or hinder the sale of the book.

12. That all these liberties are allowed, and cannot be prohibited without manifest disadvantage to the publick, may be easily proved; but we shall confine ourselves to the liberty of making epitomes, which gives occasion to our present enquiry.

13. That an uninterrupted prescription confers a right, will be easily granted, especially if it appears that the prescription, pleaded in defence of that right, might at any time have been interrupted, had it not been always thought agreeable to reason and to justice.

14. The numberless abridgements that are to be found of all kinds of writings, afford sufficient evidence that they were always thought legal, for they are printed with the names of the abbreviators and publishers, and without the least appearance of a clandestine transaction. Many of the books so abridged were the properties of men who wanted neither wealth, nor interest, nor spirit, to sue for justice, if they had thought themselves injured. Many of these abridgements must have been made by men whom we can least suspect of illegal practices, for there are few books of late that are not abridged.

15. When Bishop Burnet heard that his "History of the Reformation" was about to be abridged, he did not think of appealing to the Court of Chancery; but, to avoid any misrepresentation of his History, epitomised it himself, as he tells us in his preface.

16. But, lest it should be imagined that an author might do this rather by choice than necessity, we shall produce two more instances of the like practice, where it would certainly not have been borne if it had been suspected of illegality. The one, in Clarendon's History, which was abridged in 2 vols. 8vo.; and the other in Bishop Burnet's "History of his own Time," abridged in the same manner. The first of these books was the property of the University of

Oxford, a body tenacious enough of their rights; the other, of Bishop Burnet's heirs, whose circumstances were such as made them very sensible of any diminution of their inheritance.

17. It is observable, that both these abridgements last mentioned, with many others that might be produced, were made when the act of parliament for securing the property of copies was in force, and which, if that property was injured, afforded an easy redress: what then can be inferred from the silence and forbearance of the proprietors, but that they thought an epitome of a book no violation of the right of the proprietor?

18. That their opinion, so contrary to their own interest, was founded in reason, will appear from the nature and end of an abridgement.

19. The design of an abridgement is, to benefit mankind by facilitating the attainment of knowledge, and by contracting arguments, relations, or descriptions, into a narrow compass; to convey instruction in the easiest method, without fatiguing the attention, burdening the memory, or impairing the health of the student.

20. By this method the original author becomes, perhaps, of less value, and the proprietor's profits are diminished; but these inconveniences give way to the advantage received by mankind from the easier propagation of knowledge; for as an incorrect book is lawfully criticised, and false assertions justly confuted, because it is more the interest of mankind that error should be detected and truth discovered, than that the proprietors of a particular book should

enjoy their profits undiminished; so a tedious volume may no less lawfully be abridged, because it is better that the proprietors should suffer some damage, than that the acquisition of knowledge should be obstructed with unnecessary difficulties, and the valuable hours of thousands thrown away.

21. Therefore, as he that buys the copy of a book, buys it under this condition, that it is liable to be confuted if it is false, however his property may be affected by such a confutation; so he buys it likewise liable to be abridged if it be tedious, however his property may suffer by the abridgement.

22. To abridge a book, therefore, is no violation of the right of the proprietor, because to be subject to the hazard of an abridgement was an original condition of the property.

23. Thus we see the right of abridging authors established both by reason and the customs of trade. But, perhaps, the necessity of this practice may appear more evident, from a consideration of the consequences that must probably follow from the prohibition of it.

24. If abridgements be condemned as injurious to the proprietor of the copy, where will this argument end? Must not confutations be likewise prohibited for the same reason? or, in writings of entertainment, will not criticisms at least be entirely suppressed, as equally hurtful to the proprietor, and certainly not more necessary to the public?

25. Will not authors who write for pay, and who are rewarded commonly according to the bulk of their work, be tempted to fill their works with superflui-

ties and digressions, when the dread of an abridgement is taken away, as doubtless more negligences would be committed, and more falsehoods published, if men were not restrained by the fear of censure and confutation?

26. How many useful works will the busy, the indolent, and the less wealthy part of mankind be deprived of? How few will read or purchase forty-four large volumes of the Transactions of the Royal Society, which, in abridgement, are generally read, to the great improvement of philosophy?

27. How must general systems of sciences be written, which are nothing more than epitomes of those authors who have written on particular branches, and those works are made less necessary by such collections? Can he that destroys the profit of many copies be less criminal than he that lessens the sale of one?

28. Even to confute an erroneous book will become more difficult, since it has always been a custom to abridge the author whose assertions are examined, and sometimes to transcribe all the essential parts of his book. Must an enquirer after truth be debarred from the benefit of such confutations, unless he purchases the book, however useless, that gave occasion to the answer?

29. Having thus endeavoured to prove the legality of abridgements from custom, and the necessity of continuing that custom from reason, it remains only, that we shew that we have not printed the complainant's copy, but abridged it.

30. This will need no proof, since it will appear,

upon comparing the two books, that we have reduced thirty-seven pages to thirteen of the same print.

31. Our design is, to give our readers a short view of the present controversy; and we require that one of these two positions be proved, either that we have no right to exhibit such a view, or that we can exhibit it without epitomizing the writers of each party.

LETTER ON FIRE-WORKS.*

MR. URBAN,

AMONG the principal topics of conversation which now furnish the places of assembly with amusement, may be justly numbered the FIRE-WORKS, which are advancing, by such slow degrees, and with such costly preparation.

The first reflection that naturally arises is upon the inequality of the effect to the cause. Here are vast sums expended, many hands, and some heads employed, from day to day, and from month to month, and the whole nation is filled with expectations, by delineations and narratives. And in what is all this to end? in a building that is to attract the admiration of ages? in a bridge, which may facilitate the commerce of future generations? in a work of any kind which may stand as the model of beauty, or the pattern of virtue? To shew the blessings of the late change of our state † by any monument of these kinds, were a project worthy not only of wealth, and power, and greatness, but of learning, wisdom, and virtue. But nothing of this kind is designed; nothing more is projected, than a crowd, a shout, and a blaze: the mighty work of artifice and contrivance is to be set on fire for no other

* Inserted in the Gentleman's Mazagine, Jan. 1749.

† The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748.

purpose that I can see, than to shew how idle pyrotechnical virtuosos have been busy. Four hours the sun will shine, and then fall from his orb, and lose his memory and his lustre together; the spectators will disperse as their inclinations lead them, and wonder by what strange infatuation they had been drawn together. In this will consist the only propriety of this transient show, that it will resemble the war of which it celebrates the period. The powers of this part of the world, after long preparations, deep intrigues, and subtile schemes, have set Europe in a flame, and, after having gazed a while at their fire-works, have laid themselves down where they rose, to enquire for what they have been contending.

It is remarked likewise, that this blaze, so transitory and so useless, will be to be paid for, when it shines no longer: and many cannot forbear observing, how many lasting advantages might be purchased, how many acres might be drained, how many ways repaired, how many debtors might be released, how many widows and orphans, whom the war has ruined, might be relieved, by the expence which is now about to evaporate in smoke, and to be scattered in rockets: and there are some who think not only reason, but humanity offended, by such a trifling profusion, when so many sailors are starving, and so many churches sinking into ruins.

It is no improper enquiry by whom this expence is at last to be borne: for certainly nothing can be more unreasonable than to tax the nation for a blaze, which will be extinguished before many of them know it has been lighted; nor will it be consistent with the com-

mon practice, which directs that local advantages shall be procured at the expence of the district that enjoys them. I never found in any records, that any town petitioned the parliament for a maypole, a bull-ring, or a skittle-ground; and therefore, I should think, fire-works, as they are less durable, and less useful, have at least as little claim to the publick purse.

The fire-works are, I suppose, prepared, and therefore it is too late to obviate the project: but I hope the generosity of the great is not so far extinguished, as that they can for their diversion drain a nation already exhausted, and make us pay for pictures in the fire, which none will have the poor pleasure of beholding, but themselves.

PROPOSALS

FOR PRINTING BY SUBSCRIPTION

ESSAYS IN VERSE AND PROSE.

BY ANNA WILLIAMS.*

WHEN a writer of my sex solicits the regard of the publick, some apology seems always to be expected; and it is unhappily too much in my power to satisfy this demand; since, how little soever I may be qualified either by nature or study, for furnishing the world with literary entertainments, I have such motives for venturing my little performances into the light, as are sufficient to counterbalance the censure of arrogance, and to turn off my attention from the threats of criticism. The world will perhaps be something softened when it shall be known, that my intention was to have lived by means more suited to my ability, from which being now cut off by a total privation of sight, I have been persuaded to suffer such Essays as I had formerly written, to be collected, and fitted, if they can be fitted, by the kindness of my friends, for the press. The candour of those that have already encouraged me, will, I hope, pardon the delays incident to a work which must be performed by other eyes and other hands: and censure may surely be content to spare the compositions of a woman, written for amusement, and published for necessity.

* From the Gentleman's Magazine, Sept. 1750.

A PROJECT

FOR THE

EMPLOYMENT OF AUTHORS.*

TO THE VISITER.

SIR,

I KNOW not what apology to make for the little dissertation which I have sent, and which I will not deny that I have sent with design that you should print it. I know that admonition is very seldom grateful, and that authors are eminently choleric; yet, I hope, that you, and every impartial reader, will be convinced, that I intend the benefit of the publick, and the advancement of knowledge; and that every reader, into whose hands this shall happen to fall, will rank himself among those who are to be excepted from general censure.

I am, Sir, your humble servant.

Scire velim quare toties mihi, Nævole, tristis
Occurris fronte obductâ, ceu Marsya victus. JUV.

THERE is no gift of nature, or effect of art, however beneficial to mankind, which either by casual deviations, or foolish perversions, is not sometimes

* From the Universal Visiter, April 1756.

mischievous. Whatever may be the cause of happiness, may be made likewise the cause of misery. The medicine, which rightly applied, has power to cure, has, when rashness or ignorance prescribes it, the same power to destroy.

I have computed, at some hours of leisure, the loss and gain of *literature*, and set the pain which it produces against the pleasure. Such calculations are indeed at a great distance from mathematical exactness, as they arise from the induction of a few particulars, and from observations made rather according to the temper of the computist, than the nature of things. But such a narrow survey as can be taken, will easily shew that letters cause many blessings, and inflict many calamities; that there is scarcely an individual who may not consider them as immediately or mediately influencing his life, as they are chief instruments of conveying knowledge, and transmitting sentiments; and almost every man learns, by their means, all that is right or wrong in his sentiments and conduct.

If letters were considered only as means of pleasure, it might well be doubted in what degree of estimation they should be held; but when they are referred to necessity, the controversy is at an end: it soon appears, that though they may sometimes incommode us, yet human life would scarcely rise, without them, above the common existence of animal nature: we might indeed breathe and eat in universal ignorance, but must want all that gives pleasure or security, all the embellishments and delights, and most of the conveniences and comforts of our present condition.

Literature is a kind of intellectual light, which, like the light of the sun, may sometimes enable us to see what we do not like; but who would wish to escape unpleasing objects, by condemning himself to perpetual darkness?

Since, therefore, letters are thus indispensably necessary, since we cannot persuade ourselves to lose their benefits for the sake of escaping their mischiefs, it is worth our serious enquiry, how their benefits may be increased, and their mischiefs lessened; by what means the harvest of our studies may afford us more corn and less chaff; and how the roses of the gardens of science may gratify us more with their fragrance, and prick us less with their thorns.

I shall not, at present, mention the more formidable evils which the misapplication of literature produces, nor speak of churches infected with heresy, states inflamed with sedition, or schools infatuated with hypothetical fictions. These are evils which mankind have always lamented, and which, till mankind grow wise and modest, they must, I am afraid, continue to lament, without hope of remedy. I shall now touch only on some lighter and less extensive evils, yet such as are sufficiently heavy to those that feel them, and are of late so widely diffused, as to deserve, though perhaps not the notice of the legislature, yet the consideration of those whose benevolence inclines them to a voluntary care of public happiness.

It was long ago observed by Virgil, and I suppose by many before him, that *Bees do not make honey for their own use;* the sweets which they collect in

their laborious excursions, and store up in their hives with so much skill, are seized by those who have contributed neither toil nor art to the collection; and the poor animal is either destroyed by the invader, or left to shift without a supply. The condition is nearly the same of the gatherer of honey, and the gatherer of knowledge. The *bee* and the *author* work alike for others, and often lose the profit of their labour. The case, therefore, of authors, however hitherto neglected, may claim regard. Every body of men is important according to the joint proportion of their usefulness and their number. Individuals, however they may excel, cannot hope to be considered singly as of great weight in the political balance; and multitudes, though they may, merely by their bulk, demand some notice, are yet not of much value, unless they contribute to ease the burthen of society, by co-operating to its prosperity.

Of the men, whose condition we are now examining, the usefulness never was disputed; they are known to be the great disseminators of knowledge, and guardians of the common-wealth; and of late their number have been so much increased, that they are become a very conspicuous part of the nation. It is not now, as in former times, when men studied long, and passed through the severities of discipline, and the probation of publick trials, before they presumed to think themselves qualified for instructors of their countrymen; there is found a nearer way to fame and erudition, and the inclosures of literature are thrown open to every man whom idleness disposes to loiter, or whom pride inclines to set himself to

view. The sailor publishes his journal, the farmer writes the process of his annual labour; he that succeeds in his trade thinks his wealth a proof of his understanding, and boldly tutors the public; he that fails, considers his miscarriage as the consequence of a capacity too great for the business of a shop, and amuses himself in the Fleet with writing or translating. The last century imagined, that a man, composing in his chariot, was a new object of curiosity; but how much would the wonder have been increased by a footman studying behind it? There is now no class of men without its authors, from the peer to the thresher; nor can the sons of literature be confined any longer to Grub-street or Moorfields; they are spread over all the town and all the country, and fill every stage of habitation from the cellar to the garret.

It is well known, that the price of commodities must always fall as the quantity is increased, and that no trade can allow its professors to be multiplied beyond a certain number. The great misery of writers proceeds from their multitude. We easily perceive that in a nation of clothiers, no man could have any cloth to make but for his own back; that in a community of bakers every man must use his own bread; and what can be the case of a nation of authors, but that every man must be content to read his book to himself? For surely it is vain to hope, that of men labouring at the same occupation, any will prefer the work of his neighbour to his own; yet this expectation, wild as it is, seems to be indulged by many of the writing race, and therefore it

can be no wonder, that like all other men who suffer their minds to form inconsiderate hopes, they are harassed and dejected with frequent disappointments.

If I were to form an adage of misery, or fix the lowest point to which humanity could fall, I should be tempted to name the life of an author. Many universal comparisons there are by which misery is expressed. We talk of a man teazed like a bear at the stake, tormented like a toad under a harrow, or hunted like a dog with a stick at his tail; all these are indeed states of uneasiness, but what are they to the life of an author! of an author worried by critics, tormented by his bookseller, and hunted by his creditors. Yet such must be the case of many among the retailers of knowledge, while they continue thus to swarm over the land; and whether it be by propagation or contagion, produce new writers to heighten the general distress, to increase confusion, and hasten famine.

Having long studied the varieties of life, I can guess by every man's walk, or air, to what state of the community he belongs. Every man has noted the legs of a taylor, and the gait of a seaman; and a little extension of his physiognomical acquisitions will teach him to distinguish the countenance of an author. It is my practice, when I am in want of amusement, to place myself for an hour at Temple Bar, or any other narrow pass much frequented, and examine one by one the looks of the passengers; and I have commonly found, that, between the hours of eleven and four, every sixth man

is an author. They are seldom to be seen very early in the morning, or late in the evening, but about dinner time they are all in motion, and have one uniform eagerness in their faces, which gives little opportunity of discerning their hopes or fears, their pleasures or their pains.

But, in the afternoon, when they have all dined, or composed themselves to pass the day without a dinner, their passions have full play, and I can perceive one man wondering at the stupidity of the publick, by which his new book has been totally neglected; another cursing the French who fright away literary curiosity by their threats of an invasion; another swearing at his bookseller, who will advance no money without copy; another perusing, as he walks, his publisher's bill; another murmuring at an unanswerable criticism; another determining to write no more to a generation of barbarians; and another resolving to try once again, whether he cannot awaken the drowsy world to a sense of his merit.

It sometimes happens, that there may be remarked among them a smile of complacence, or a strut of elevation; but if these favourites of fortune are carefully watched for a few days, they seldom fail to shew the transitoriness of human felicity; the crest falls, the gaiety is ended, and there appear evident tokens of a successful rival, or a fickle patron.

But of all authors, those are the most wretched, who exhibit their productions on the theatre, and who are to propitiate first the manager, and then the publick. Many an humble visitant have I followed to the doors of these lords of the drama, seen him

touch the knocker with a shaking hand, and, after long deliberation, adventure to solicit entrance by a single knock: but I never staid to see them come out from their audience, because my heart is tender, and being subject to frights in bed, I would not willingly dream of an author.

That the number of authors is disproportionate to the maintenance which the publick seems willing to assign them; that there is neither praise nor meat for all who write, is apparent from this; that, like wolves in long winters, they are forced to prey on one another. The *Reviewers* and *Critical Reviewers*, the *Remarkers* and *Examiners*, can satisfy their hunger only by devouring their brethren. I am far from imagining that they are naturally more ravenous or blood-thirsty than those on whom they fall with so much violence and fury; but they are hungry, and hunger must be satisfied; and these savages, when their bellies are full, will fawn on those whom they now bite.

The result of all these considerations amounts only to this, that the number of writers must at last be lessened, but by what method this great design can be accomplished, is not easily discovered. It was lately proposed, that every man who kept a dog should pay a certain tax, which, as the contriver of ways and means very judiciously observed, would either destroy the dogs, or bring in money. Perhaps it might be proper to lay some such tax upon authors, only the payment must be lessened in proportion as the animal, upon which it is raised, is less necessary; for many a man that would pay for his dog, will dis-

miss his dedicator. Perhaps, if every one who employed or harboured an author, was assessed a groat a-year, it would sufficiently lessen the nuisance without destroying the species.

But no great alteration is to be attempted rashly. We must consider how the authors, which this tax shall exclude from their trade, are to be employed. The nets used in the *herring-fishery* can furnish work but for few, and not many can be employed as labourers at the foundation of the *new bridge*. There must, therefore, be some other scheme formed for their accommodation, which the present state of affairs may easily supply. It is well known, that great efforts have been lately made to man the fleet, and augment the army, and loud complaints are made of useful hands forced away from their families into the service of the crown. This offensive exertion of power may be easily avoided, by opening a few houses for the entertainment of discarded authors who would enter into the service with great alacrity, as most of them are zealous friends of every present government; many of them are men of able bodies and strong limbs, qualified at least as well for the *musket* as the *pen;* they are, perhaps, at present a little emaciated and infeebled, but would soon recover their strength and flesh with good quarters and present pay.

There are some reasons for which they may seem particularly qualified for a military life. They are used to suffer want of every kind; they are accustomed to obey the word of command from their patrons and their booksellers; they have always passed

a life of hazard and adventure, uncertain what may be their state on the next day; and, what is of yet more importance, they have long made their minds familiar to danger, by descriptions of bloody battles, daring undertakings, and wonderful escapes. They have their memories stored with all the stratagems of war, and have over and over practised in their closets the expedients of distress, the exultation of triumph, and the resignation of heroes sentenced to destruction.

Some indeed there are, who by often changing sides in controversy, may give just suspicion of their fidelity, and whom I should think likely to desert for the pleasure of desertion, or for a farthing a month advanced in their pay. Of these men I know not what use can be made, for they can never be trusted, but with shackles on their legs. There are others whom long depression, under supercilious patrons, has so humbled and crushed, that they will never have steadiness to keep their ranks. But for these men there may be found fifes and drums, and they will be well enough pleased to inflame others to battle, if they are not obliged to fight themselves.

It is more difficult to know what can be done with the *ladies of the pen*, of whom this age has produced greater numbers than any former time. It is indeed common for women to follow the camp, but no prudent general will allow them in such numbers as the breed of authoresses would furnish. Authoresses are seldom famous for clean linen, therefore they cannot make laundresses; they are rarely skilful at their needle, and cannot mend a soldier's shirt; they will

make bad sutlers, being not much accustomed to eat. I must therefore propose, that they shall form a regiment of themselves, and garrison the town which is supposed to be in most danger of a French invasion. They will probably have no enemies to encounter; but, if they are once shut up together, they will soon disincumber the publick by tearing out the eyes of one another.

The great art of life, is to play for much, and to stake little; which rule I have kept in view through this whole project; for, if our authors and authoresses defeat our enemies, we shall obtain all the usual advantages of victory; and, if they should be destroyed in war, we shall lose only those who had wearied the publick, and whom, whatever be their fate, nobody will miss.

* *

PREFACE

TO THE

LITERARY MAGAZINE.

MDCCLVI.

TO THE PUBLIC.

THERE are some practices which custom and prejudice have so unhappily influenced, that to observe or neglect them is equally censurable. The promises made by the undertakers of any new design, every man thinks himself at liberty to deride, and yet every man expects, and expects with reason, that he who solicits the publick attention, should give some account of his pretensions.

We are about to exhibit to our countrymen a new MONTHLY COLLECTION, to which the well-deserved popularity of the first undertaking of this kind, has now made it almost necessary to prefix the name of MAGAZINE. There are already many such periodical compilations, of which we do not envy the reception, nor shall dispute the excellence. If the nature of things would allow us to indulge our wishes, we should desire to advance our own interest without lessening that of any other, and to excite the

curiosity of the vacant, rather than withdraw that which other writers have already engaged.

Our design is to give the history, political and literary, of every month, and our pamphlets must consist, like other collections, of many articles unconnected and independent on each other.

The chief political object of an Englishman's attention must be the great council of the nation, and we shall therefore register all publick proceedings with particular care. We shall not attempt to give any regular series of debates, or to amuse our readers with senatorial rhetoric. The speeches inserted in other papers have been long known to be fictitious, and produced sometimes by men who never heard the debate, nor had any authentic information. We have no design to impose thus grossly on our readers, and shall therefore give the naked arguments used in the discussion of every question, and add, when they can be obtained, the names of the speakers.

As the proceedings in parliament are unintelligible without a knowledge of the facts to which they relate, and of the state of the nations to which they extend their influence, we shall exhibit monthly a view, though contracted yet distinct, of foreign affairs, and lay open the designs and interests of those nations which are considered by the English either as friends or enemies.

Of transactions in our own country curiosity will demand a more particular account, and we shall record every remarkable event, extraordinary casualty, uncommon performance, or striking novelty, and shall apply our care to the discovery of truth, with very little reliance on the daily historians.

The lists of births, marriages, deaths and burials will be so drawn up that, we hope, very few omissions or mistakes will be found, though some must be expected to happen in so great a variety, where there is neither leisure nor opportunity for minute information.

It is intended that lists shall be given of all the officers and persons in publick employment; and that all the alterations shall be noted as they happen, by which our list will be a kind of Court Register always complete.

The literary history necessarily contains an account of the labours of the learned, in which whether we shall show much judgment or sagacity, must be left to our readers to determine; we can promise only justness and candour. It is not to be expected that we can insert extensive extracts or critical examinations of all the writings which this age of writers may offer to our notice. A few only will deserve the distinction of criticism, and a few only will obtain it. We shall try to select the best and most important pieces, and are not without hope, that we may sometimes influence the publick voice, and hasten the popularity of a valuable work.

Our regard will not be confined to books; it will extend to all the productions of science. Any new calculation, a commodious instrument, the discovery of any property in nature, or any new method of bringing known properties into use or view, shall be diligently treasured up wherever found.

In a paper designed for general perusal, it will be necessary to dwell most upon things of general enter-

tainment. The elegant trifles of literature, the wild strains of fancy, the pleasing amusements of harmless wit, shall therefore be considered as necessary to our collection. Nor shall we omit researches into antiquity, explanation of coins or inscriptions, disquisitions on controverted history, conjectures on doubtful geography, or any other on those petty works upon which learned ingenuity is sometimes employed.

To these accounts of temporary transactions and fugitive performances, we shall add some dissertations on things more permanent and stable; some enquiries into the history of nature, which has hitherto been treated as if mankind were afraid of exhausting it. There are in our own country many things and places worthy of note that are yet little known, and every day gives opportunities of new observations which are made and forgotten. We hope to find means of extending and perpetuating physiological discoveries, and with regard to this article, and all others, intreat the assistance of curious and candid correspondents.

We shall labour to attain as much exactness as can be expected in such variety, and shall give as much variety as can consist with reasonable exactness; for this purpose a selection has been made of men qualified for the different parts of the work, and each has the employment assigned him, which he is supposed most able to discharge.*

See page 33.

A

DISSERTATION

UPON THE

GREEK COMEDY,

TRANSLATED FROM BRUMOY.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

I CONCLUDE this work according to my promise, with an account of the Comick Theatre, and intreat the reader, whether a favourer or an enemy of the ancient Drama, not to pass his censure upon the authors or upon me, without a regular perusal of this whole work. For, though it seems to be composed of pieces of which each may precede or follow without dependance upon the other, yet all the parts, taken together, form a system which would be destroyed by their disjunction. Which way shall we come at the

* Published by Mrs. Lennox in 4to, 1759. To the third volume of this work the following Advertisement is prefixed. "In this volume, the Discourse on the Greek Comedy, and the General Conclusion, are translated by the celebrated author of the Rambler. The Comedy of the Birds, and that of Peace, by a young Gentleman. The Comedy of the Frogs, by the learned and ingenious Dr. Gregory Sharpe. The Discourse upon the Cyclops, by John Bourrya, Esq. The Cyclops, by Dr. Grainger, author of the translation of Tibullus." E.

knowledge of the ancients' shows, but by comparing together all that is left of them? The value and necessity of this comparison determined me to publish all, or to publish nothing. Besides, the reflections on each piece, and on the general taste of antiquity, which, in my opinion, are not without importance, have a kind of obscure gradation, which I have carefully endeavoured to preserve, and of which the thread would be lost by him who should slightly glance sometimes upon one piece, and sometimes upon another. It is a structure which I have endeavoured to make as near to regularity as I could, and which must be seen in its full extent and in proper succession. The reader who skips here and there over the book, might make a hundred objections which are either anticipated, or answered in those pieces which he might have overlooked. I have laid such stress upon the connexion of the parts of this work, that I have declined to exhaust the subject, and have suppressed many of my notions, that I might leave the judicious reader to please himself by forming such conclusions as I supposed him like to discover, as well as myself. I am not here attempting to prejudice the reader by an apology either for the ancients, or my own manner. I have not claimed a right of obliging others to determine, by my opinion, the degrees of esteem which I think due to the authors of the Athenian Stage; nor do I think that

on in the present time, ought to depend
of thinking or expressing my thoughts,
ntirely to the judgment of the publick.

A

DISSERTATION,

&c.

I.

Reasons why Aristophanes may be reviewed, without translating him entirely.

I WAS in doubt a long time, whether I should meddle at all with the Greek comedy, both because the pieces which remain are very few, the licentiousness of Aristophanes, their author, is exorbitant, and it is very difficult to draw from the performances of a single poet, a just idea of Greek comedy. Besides, it seemed that tragedy was sufficient to employ all my attention, that I might give a complete representation of that kind of writing, which was most esteemed by the Athenians and the wiser Greeks*, particularly by Socrates, who set no value upon comedy or comick actors. But the very name of that drama, which in polite ages, and above all others in our own, has been so much advanced, that it has become equal to tragedy, if not preferable, inclines me to think that I may be partly reproached with an imperfect work, if, after having gone as deep as I could into the nature of Greek tragedy, I did not at least sketch a draught of the comedy.

* There was a law which forbad any judge of the Areopagus to write comedy.

I then considered, that it was not wholly impossible to surmount, at least in part, the difficulties which had stopt me, and to go somewhat farther than the learned writers*, who have published in French some pieces of Aristophanes; not that I pretend to make large translations. The same reasons which have hindered with respect to the more noble parts of the Greek drama, operate with double force upon my present subject. Though ridicule, which is the business of comedy, be not less uniform in all times, than the passions which are moved by tragick compositions; yet, if diversity of manners may sometimes disguise the passions themselves, how much greater change will be made in jocularities! The truth is, that they are so much changed by the course of time, that pleasantry and ridicule become dull and flat much more easily than the pathetick becomes ridiculous.

That which is commonly known by the term jocular and comick, is nothing but a turn of expression, an airy phantom, that must be caught at a particular point. As we lose this point, we lose the jocularity, and find nothing but dulness in its place. A lucky sally, which has filled a company with laughter, will have no effect in print, because it is shown single and separate from the circumstance which gave it force. Many satirical jests, found in ancient books, have had the same fate; their spirit has evaporated by time, and has left nothing to us but insipidity. None but the most biting passages have preserved their points unblunted.

But, besides this objection, which extends uni-

* Madame Dacier, M. Boivin.

versally to all translations of Aristophanes, and many allusions of which time has deprived us, there are loose expressions thrown out to the populace to raise laughter from corrupt passions, which are unworthy of the curiosity of decent readers, and which ought to rest eternally in proper obscurity. Not every thing in this infancy of comedy was excellent, at least it would not appear excellent at this distance of time, in comparison of compositions of the same kind, which lie before our eyes; and this is reason enough to save me the trouble of translating, and the reader that of perusing. As for that small number of writers who delight in those delicacies, they give themselves very little trouble about translations, except it be to find fault with them; and the majority of people of wit like comedies that may give them pleasure, without much trouble of attention, and are not much disposed to find beauties in that which requires long deductions to find it beautiful. If Helen had not appeared beautiful to the Greeks and Trojans but by force of argument, we had never been told of the Trojan war.

On the other side, Aristophanes is an author more considerable than one would imagine. The History of Greece could not pass over him, when it comes to touch upon the people of Athens; this alone might procure him respect, even when he was not considered as a comick poet But when his writings are taken into view, we find him the only author from whom may be drawn a just idea of the comedy of his age; and farther, we find in his pieces, that he often makes attacks upon the tragick writers, particularly upon the

three chief, whose valuable remains we have had under examination; and, what is yet worse, fell sometimes upon the state, and upon the gods themselves.

The chief heads of this discourse.

II. These considerations have determined me to follow, in my representation of this writer, the same method which I have taken in several tragick pieces, which is, that of giving an exact analysis as far as the matter would allow, from which I deduce four important systems. First, Upon the nature of the comedy of that age, without omitting that of Menander*. Secondly, Upon the vices and govern-

* Menander, an Athenian, son of Diopethes and Hegestrates, was apparently the most eminent of the writers of the new comedy. He had been a scholar of Theophrastus: his passion for the women brought infamy upon him: he was squint-eyed, and very lively. Of the one hundred and eighty comedies, or, according to Suidas, the eighty which he composed, and which are all said to be translated by Terence, we have now only a few fragments remaining. He flourished about the 115th Olympiad, 318 years before the Christian Æra. He was drowned as he was bathing in the port of Pireus. I have told in another place, what is said of one Philemon, his antagonist, not so good a poet as himself, but one who often gained the prize. This Philemon was older than him, and was much in fashion in the time of Alexander the Great. He expressed all his wishes in two lines, "To have health, and fortune, and pleasure, and never to be in debt, is all I desire." He was very covetous, and was pictured with his fingers hooked, so that he set his comedies at a high price. He lived about a hundred years, some say a hundred and one. Many tales are told of his death; Valerius Maximus says, that he died with laughing at a little incident: seeing an ass eating his figs, he ordered his servant to drive her

ment of the Athenians. Thirdly, Upon the notion we ought to entertain of Aristophanes, with respect to Eschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Fourthly, Upon the jest which he makes upon the gods. These things will not be treated in order, as a regular discourse seems to require, but will arise sometimes separately, sometimes together, from the view of each particular comedy, and from the reflections which this free manner of writing will allow. I shall conclude with a short view of the whole, and so finish my design.

History of Comedy.

III. I shall not repeat here what Madame Dacier, and so many others before her, have collected of all that can be known relating to the history of comedy. Its beginnings are as obscure as those of tragedy, and there is an appearance that we take these two words in a more extensive meaning; they had both the same original, that is, they began among the festivals of the vintage, and were not distinguished from one another but by a burlesque or serious chorus, which made all the soul and all the body. But, if we give these words a stricter sense, according to the notion which has since been formed, comedy was produced after tragedy, and was in many respects a sequel and imitation of the works of Eschylus. It is

away; the man made no great haste, and the ass eat them all." "Well done," says Philemon, "now give her some wine."—Apuleius and Quintilian placed this writer much below Menander, but give him the second place.

in reality nothing more than an action set before the sight by the same artifice of representation. Nothing is different but the object, which is merely ridicule. This original of true comedy will be easily admitted, if we take the word of Horace, who must have known better than us the true dates of dramatick works. This poet supports the system which I have endeavoured to establish in the second discourse* so strongly as to amount to demonstrative proof.

Horace† expresses himself thus, "Thespis is said to have been the first inventor of a species of tragedy, in which he carried about in carts, players smeared with the dregs of wine, of whom some sung and others declaimed." This was the first attempt both of tragedy and comedy: for Thespis made use only of one speaker, without the least appearance of dialogue. "Eschylus afterwards exhibited them with more dignity. He placed them on a stage, somewhat above the ground, covered their faces with masks, put buskins on their feet, dressed them in trailing robes, and made them speak in a more lofty style." Horace omits invention of dialogue, which we learn from Aristotle‡. But, however, it may be well enough inferred from the following words of Horace; this completion is mentioned while he speaks of Eschylus, and therefore to Eschylus it must be ascribed: "Then first appeared the old comedy, with great success in its beginning." Thus we see that the Greek comedy arose after tragedy, and by consequence tragedy was its parent. It was formed in imitation of Eschylus,

* Greek Theatre, part i. vol. i.

† Hor. Poet. v. 275. ‡ Poet. ch. 4.

the inventor of the tragick drama; or, to go yet higher into antiquity, had its original from Homer, who was the guide of Eschylus. For, if we credit Aristotle *, comedy had its birth from the Margites, a satirical poem of Homer, and tragedy from the Iliad and Odyssey. Thus the design and artifice of comedy were drawn from Homer and Eschylus. This will appear less surprising, since the ideas of the human mind are always gradual, and arts are seldom invented but by imitation. The first idea contains the seed of the second; this second, expanding itself, gives birth to a third; and so on. Such is the progress of the mind of man; it proceeds in its productions step by step, in the same manner as nature multiplies her works by imitating, or repeating her own act, when she seems most to run into variety. In this manner it was that comedy had its birth, its increase, its improvement, its perfection, and its diversity.

IV. But the question is, who was the happy author of that imitation, and that show, whether only one like Eschylus of tragedy, or whether they were several? for neither Horace, nor any before him, explained this †. This poet only quotes three

* Poet. ch. 4.

† "The alterations, which have been made in tragedy, were perceptible, and the authors of them unknown; but comedy has lain in obscurity, being not cultivated, like tragedy, from the time of its original: for it was long before the magistrates began to give comick choruses. It was first exhibited by actors, who played voluntarily, without orders of the magistrates. From the time that it began to take some settled form, we know its authors, but are not informed who first used masks.

writers who had reputation in the old comedy, Eupolis*, Cratinus†, and Aristophanes, of whom he says, "That they, and others who wrote in the same way, reprehended the faults of particular persons with excessive liberty." These are probably the poets of the greatest reputation, though they were not the first, and we know the names of many others‡. Among these three we may be sure that Aristophanes had the greatest character, since not only the king of Persia§ expressed a high esteem of him to the Gre-

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added prologues, increased the numbers of the actors, and joined all the other things which now belong to it. The first that thought of forming comick fables were Epicharmus and Phormys, and consequently this manner came from Sicily: Crates was the first Athenian that adopted it, and forsook the practice of gross raillery that prevailed before." *Aristot.* ch. 5. Crates flourished in the 82d Olympiad, 450 years before our æra, twelve or thirteen years before Aristophanes.

* Eupolis was an Athenian; his death, which we shall mention presently, is represented differently by authors, who almost all agree that he was drowned. Elian adds an incident which deserves to be mentioned: he says (book x. Of Animals), that one Augeas of Eleusis, made Eupolis a present of a fine mastiff, who was so faithful to his master as to worry to death a slave who was carrying away some of his comedies. He adds, that when the poet died at Egene, his dog staid by his tomb till he perished by grief and hunger.

† Cratinus of Athens, who was son of Callimedes, died at the age of ninety-seven. He composed twenty comedies, of which nine had the prize: he was a daring writer, but a cowardly warrior.

‡ Hertelius has collected the sentences of fifty Greek poets of the different ages of comedy.

§ Interlude of the second act of the comedy intituled "The Acharniens."

cian ambassadors, as of a man extremely useful to his country, and Plato* rated him so high as to say that the Graces resided in his bosom; but likewise because he is the only writer of whom any comedies have made their way down to us, through the confusion of times. There are not indeed any proofs that he was the inventor of comedy, properly so called, especially since he had not only predecessors who wrote in the same kind, but it is at least a sign, that he had contributed more than any other to bring comedy to the perfection in which he left it. We shall, therefore, not inquire farther, whether regular comedy was the work of a single mind, which seems yet to be unsettled, or of several contemporaries, such as these which Horace quotes. We must distinguish three forms which comedy wore, in consequence of the genius of the writers, or of the laws of the magistrates, and the change of the government of many into that of few.

The Old, Middle, and New Comedy.

That comedy†, which Horace calls the ancient, and which, according to his account, was after Eschylus, retained something of its original state, and of the licentiousness which it practised, while it was yet without regularity, and uttered loose jokes and abuse upon the passers-by from the cart of Thespis. Though it was now properly modelled, as might

* Epigram attributed to Plato.

† This history of the three ages of comedy, and their different characters, is taken in part from the valuable fragments of Platonius.

have been worthy of a great theatre and a numerous audience, and deserved the name of a regular comedy, it was not yet much nearer to decency. It was a representation of real actions, and exhibited the dress, the motions, and the air, as far as could be done in a mask, of any one who was thought proper to be sacrificed to publick scorn. In a city so free, or to say better, so licentious as Athens was at that time, nobody was spared, not even the chief magistrate, nor the very judges, by whose voice comedies were allowed or prohibited. The insolence of those performances reached to open impiety, and sport was made equally with men and gods*. These are the features by which the greatest part of the compositions of Aristophanes will be known. In which it may be particularly observed, that not the least appearance of praise will be found, and therefore certainly no trace of flattery or servility.

This licentiousness of the poets, to which in some sort Socrates fell a sacrifice, at last was restrained by a law. For the government, which was before shared by all the inhabitants, was now confined to a settled number of citizens. It was ordered that no man's name should be mentioned on the stage; but poetical malignity was not long in finding the secret of defeating the purpose of the law, and of making themselves ample compensation for the restraint laid upon authors, by the necessity of inventing false names. They set themselves to work upon known and real characters, so that they had now the advantage of giving a more exquisite gratification to the vanity of

* It will be shown how and in what sense this was allowed.

poets, and the malice of spectators. One had the refined pleasure of setting others to guess, and the other that of guessing right by naming the masks. When pictures are so like that the name is not wanted, nobody inscribes it. The consequence of the law, therefore, was nothing more than to make that done with delicacy, which was done grossly before; and the art, which was expected would be confined within the limits of duty, was only partly transgressed with more ingenuity. Of this Aristophanes, who was comprehended in this law, gives us good examples in some of his poems. Such was that which was afterwards called the middle comedy.

The new comedy, or that which followed, was again an excellent refinement, prescribed by the magistrates, who, as they had before forbid the use of real names, forbad afterwards real subjects, and the train of choruses* too much given to abuse; so that the poets saw themselves reduced to the necessity of bringing imaginary names and subjects upon the stage, which at once purified and enriched the theatre; for comedy from that time was no longer a fury armed with torches, but a pleasing and innocent mirror of human life.

Chacun peint avec art dans ce nouveau miroir
S'y vit avec plaisir, ou crut ne s'y pas voir!
L'avare des premiers rit du tableau fidelle
D'un avare souvent tracé sour son modelle;
Et mille fois un fat finement exprimé
Méconnut le portrait sur lui-même formé.†

* Perhaps the chorus was forbid in the middle age of the comedy. Platonius seems to say so.

† Despreaux Art. Poet. chant. 8.

The comedy of Menander and Terence is, in propriety of speech, the fine comedy. I do not repeat all this after so many writers but just to recall it to memory, and to add to what they have said, something which they have omitted, a singular effect of publick edicts appearing in the successive progress of the art. A naked history of poets and of poetry, such as has been often given, is a mere body without soul, unless it be enlivened with an account of the birth, progress, and perfection of the art, and of the causes by which they were produced.

The Latin Comedy.

VI. To omit nothing essential which concerns this part, we shall say a word of the Latin comedy. When the arts passed from Greece to Rome, comedy took its turn among the rest: but the Romans applied themselves only to the new species, without chorus or personal abuse; though perhaps they might have played some translations of the old or the middle comedy, for Pliny gives an account of one which was represented in his own time. But the Roman comedy, which was modelled upon the last species of the Greek, hath nevertheless its different ages, according as its authors were rough or polished. The pieces of Livius Andronicus*, more ancient and less refined than those of the writers who learned the art from him, may be said to compose the first age, or the old Roman comedy and tragedy. To him you must join Nevius his contemporary, and En-

* The year of Rome 514, the first year of the 135th Olympiad.

nius, who lived some years after him. The second age comprises Pacuvius, Cecilius, Accius, and Plautus, unless it shall be thought better to reckon Plautus with Terence, to make the third and highest age of the Latin comedy, which may properly be called the new comedy, especially with regard to Terence, who was the friend of Lelius, and the faithful copier of Menander.

But the Romans, without troubling themselves with this order of succession, distinguished their comedies by the dresses * of the players. The robe, called *Prætexta*, with large borders of purple, being the formal dress of magistrates in their dignity and in the exercise of their office, the actors, who had this dress, gave its name to the comedy. This is the same with that called *Trabeata* †, from Trabea, the dress of the consuls in peace, and the generals in triumph. The second species introduced the senators not in great offices, but as private men; this was called *Toguta*, from *Toga*. The last species was named *Tabernaria*, from the tunick, or the common dress of the people, or rather from the mean houses which were painted on the scene. There is no need of mentioning the farces, which took their name and original from Atella, an ancient town of Campania in Italy, because they differed from the low comedy only by greater licentiousness; nor of those which were called *Palliates*, from the Greek, a cloak, in which the Greek characters were

* *Prætextæ*, *Togatæ*, *Tabernariæ*.

† Suet. de Claris Grammat. says, that C. Gelissus, librarian to Augustus, was the author of it.

dressed upon the Roman stage, because that habit only distinguished the nation, not the dignity or character, like those which have been mentioned before. To say truth, these are but trifling distinctions; for, as we shall show in the following pages, comedy may be more usefully and judiciously distinguished, by the general nature of its subjects. As to the Romans, whether they had, or had not, reason for these names, they have left us so little upon the subject which is come down to us, that we need not trouble ourselves with a distinction which affords us no solid satisfaction. Plautus and Terence, the only authors of whom we are in possession, give us a fuller notion of the real nature of their comedy, with respect at least to their own times, than can be received from names and terms, from which we have no real exemplification.

The Greek Comedy is reduced only to Aristophanes.

VII. Not to go too far out of our way, let us return to Aristophanes, the only poet in whom we can now find the Greek comedy. He is the single writer whom the violence of time has in some degree spared, after having buried in darkness, and almost in forgetfulness, so many great men, of whom we have nothing but the names and a few fragments, and such slight memorials as are scarcely sufficient to defend them against the enemies of the honour of antiquity; yet these memorials are like the last glimmer of the setting sun, which scarce affords us a weak and fading light: yet from this glimmer we must endeavour to collect rays of sufficient strength to form a

picture of the Greek comedy approaching as near as possible to the truth.

Of the personal character of Aristophanes little is known; what account we can give of it must therefore be had from his comedies. It can scarcely be said with certainty of what country he was: the invectives of his enemies so often called in question his qualification as a citizen, that they have made it doubtful. Some said, he was of Rhodes, others of Egena, a little island in the neighbourhood, and all agreed that he was a stranger. As to himself, he said that he was the son of Philip, and born in the Cydathenian quarter; but he confessed that some of his fortune was in Egena, which was probably the original seat of his family. He was, however, formally declared a citizen of Athens, upon evidence, whether good or bad, upon a decisive judgment, and this for having made his judges merry by an application of a saying of Telemachus*, of which this is the sense: "I am, as my mother tells me, the son of Philip; for my own part, I know little of the matter, for what child knows his own father?" This piece of merriment did him as much good, as Archias received from the oration of Cicero†, who said that that poet was a Roman citizen. An honour which, if he had not inherited by birth, he deserved for his genius.

Aristophanes‡ flourished in the age of the great

* Homer, Odyssey.

† Orat. pro Archia Poeta.

‡ In the 85th year of the Olympiad, 437 before our Æra, and 317 of the foundation of Rome.

men of Greece, particularly of Socrates and Euripides, both of whom he outlived. He made a great figure during the whole Peloponnesian war, not merely as a comick poet by whom the people were diverted, but as the censor of the government, as a man kept in pay by the state to reform it, and almost to act the part of the arbitrator of the publick. A particular account of his comedies will best let us into his personal character as a poet, and into the nature of his genius, which is what we are most interested to know. It will, however, not be amiss to prepossess our readers a little by the judgments that had been passed upon him by the criticks of our own time, without forgetting one of the ancients that deserves great respect.

Aristophanes censured and praised.

VIII. "Aristophanes," says Father Rapin, "is not exact in the contrivance of his fables; his fictions are not probable; he brings real characters upon the stage too coarsely and too openly. Socrates, whom he ridicules so much in his plays, had a more delicate turn of burlesque than himself, and had his merriment without his impudence. It is true, that Aristophanes wrote amidst the confusion and licentiousness of the old comedy, and he was well acquainted with the humour of the Athenians, to whom uncommon merit always gave disgust, and therefore he made the eminent men of his time the subject of his merriment. But the too great desire which he had to delight the people by exposing worthy characters upon the stage, made him at the same time an unworthy man; and the turn of his genius to ridicule was disfigured and

corrupted by the indelicacy and outrageousness of his manners. After all, his pleasantry consists chiefly in new-coined puffy language. The dish of twenty-six syllables, which he gives in his last scene of his 'Female Orators,' would please few tastes in our days. His language is sometimes obscure, perplexed and vulgar, and his frequent play with words, his oppositions of contradictory terms, his mixture of tragick and comick, of serious and burlesque, are all flat; and his jocularity, if you examine it to the bottom, is all false. Menander is diverting in a more elegant manner; his style is pure, clear, elevated, and natural; he persuades like an orator, and instructs like a philosopher; and if we may venture to judge upon the fragments which remain, it appears that his pictures of civil life are pleasing, that he makes every one speak according to his character, that every man may apply his pictures of life to himself, because he always follows nature, and feels for the personages which he brings upon the stage. To conclude, Plutarch, in his comparison of these authors, says, that the Muse of Aristophanes is an abandoned prostitute, and that of Menander a modest woman."

It is evident that this whole character is taken from Plutarch. Let us now go on with this remark of father Rapin, since we have already spoken of the Latin comedy, of which he gives us a description.

"With respect to the two Latin comick poets, Plautus is ingenious in his designs, happy in his conceptions, and fruitful of invention. He has, however, according to Horace, some low jocularities, and those smart sayings, which made the vulgar laugh, made

him be pitied by men of higher taste. It is true, that some of his jests are extremely good, but others likewise are very bad. To this every man is exposed who is too much determined to make sallies of merriment; they endeavour to raise that laughter by hyperboles, which would not arise by a just representation of things. Plautus is not quite so regular as Terence in the scheme of his designs, or in the distribution of his acts, but he is more simple in his plot; for the fables of Terence are commonly complex, as may be seen in his Andria, which contains two amours. It was imputed as a fault to Terence, that, to bring more action upon the stage, he made one Latin comedy out of two Greek; but then Terence unravels his plot more naturally than Plautus, which Plautus did more naturally than Aristophanes; and though Cæsar calls Terence but one half of Menander, because, though he had softness and delicacy, there was in him some want of spriteliness and strength; yet he has written in a manner so natural and so judicious, that though he was then only a copy, he is now an original. No author has ever had a more exact sense of pure nature. Of Cecilius, since we have only a few fragments, I shall say nothing. All that we know of him is told us by Varrus, that he was happy in the choice of subjects."

Rapin omits many others for the same reason, that we have not enough of their works to qualify us for judges. While we are upon this subject, it will perhaps not displease the reader to see what that critick's opinion is of Lopes de Vega and Moliere. It will appear, that with respect to Lopes de Vega, he

is rather too profuse of praise: that in speaking of Moliere, he is too parsimonious. This piece will, however, be of use to our design, when we shall examine to the bottom what it is that ought to make the character of comedy.

" No man has ever had a greater genius for comedy than Lopes de Vega the Spaniard. He had a fertility of wit, joined with great beauty of conception, and a wonderful readiness of composition; for he has written more than three hundred comedies. His name alone gave reputation to his pieces; for his reputation was so well established, that a work, which came from his hands, was sure to claim the approbation of the publick. He had a mind too extensive to be subjected to rules, or restrained by limits. For that reason he gave himself up to his own genius, on which he could always depend with confidence. When he wrote, he consulted no other laws than the taste of his auditors, and regulated his manner more by the success of his work than by the rules of reason. Thus he discarded all scruples of unity, and all the superstitions of probability." (This is certainly not said with a design to praise him, and must be connected with that which immediately follows.) " But as for the most part he endeavours at too much jocularity, and carries ridicule to too much refinement; his conceptions are often rather happy than just, and rather wild than natural; for, by subtilizing merriment too far, it becomes too nice to be true, and his beauties lose their power of striking by being too delicate and acute.

" Among us, nobody has carried ridicule in co-

medy farther than Moliere. Our ancient comick writers brought no characters higher than servants, to make sport upon the theatre; but we are diverted upon the theatre of Moliere by marquises and people of quality. Others have exhibited in comedy no species of life above that of a citizen; but Moliere shows us all Paris, and the court. He is the only man amongst us, who has laid open those features of nature by which he is exactly marked, and may be accurately known. The beauties of his pictures are so natural, that they are felt by persons of the least discernment, and his power of pleasantry received half its force from his power of copying. His Misanthrope is, in my opinion, the most complete, and likewise the most singular character that has ever appeared upon the stage: but the disposition of his comedies is always defective some way or another. This is all which we can observe in general upon comedy."

Such are the thoughts of one of the most refined judges of works of genius, from which, though they are not all oraculous, some advantages may be drawn, as they always make some approaches to truth.

Madame Dacier *, having her mind full of the merit of Aristophanes, expresses herself in this manner: "No man had ever more discernment than him, in finding out the ridiculous, nor a more ingenious manner of showing it to others. His remarks are natural and easy, and, what very rarely can be found, with great copiousness he has great delicacy. To say all at once, the Attick wit, of which the ancients

* Preface to Plautus. Paris, 1684.

made such boast, appears more in Aristophanes than in any other that I know of in antiquity. But what is most of all to be admired in him is, that he is always so much master of the subject before him, that, without doing any violence to himself, he finds a way to introduce naturally things which at first appeared most distant from his purpose; and even the most quick and unexpected of his desultory sallies appear the necessary consequence of the foregoing incidents. This is that art which sets the dialogues of Plato above imitation, which we must consider as so many dramatick pieces, which are equally entertaining by the action and by the dialogue. The style of Aristophanes is no less pleasing than his fancy; for, besides its clearness, its vigour and its sweetness, there is in it a certain harmony so delightful to the ear, that there is no pleasure equal to that of reading it. When he applies himself to vulgar mediocrity of style, he descends without meanness; when he attempts the sublime, he is elevated without obscurity; and no man has ever had the art of blending all the different kinds of writing so equally together. After having studied all that is left us of Grecian learning, if we have not read Aristophanes, we cannot yet know all the charms and beauties of that language."

Plutarch's sentiment upon Aristophanes and Menander.

IX. This is a pompous eulogium: but let us suspend our opinion, and hear that of Plutarch, who, being an ancient, well deserves our attention, at least after we have heard the moderns before him. This is thon the sum of his judgment concerning Aristo-

phanes and Menander. To Menander he gives the preference, without allowing much competition. He objects to Aristophanes, that he carries all his thoughts beyond nature, that he writes rather to the crowd than to men of character; that he affects a style obscure and licentious; tragical, pompous, and mean, sometimes serious, and sometimes ludicrous, even to puerility; that he makes none of his personages speak according to any distinct character, so that in his scenes the son cannot be known from the father, the citizen from the boor, the hero from the shopkeeper, or the divine from the serving-man. Whereas the diction of Menander, which is always uniform and pure, is very justly adapted to different characters, rising when it is necessary to vigorous and spritely comedy, yet without transgressing the proper limits, or losing sight of nature, in which Menander, says Plutarch, has attained a perfection to which no other writer has arrived. For, what man besides himself has ever found the art of making a diction equally suitable to women and children, to old and young, to divinities and heroes? Now Menander has found this happy secret, in the equality and flexibility of his diction, which, though always the same, is nevertheless different upon different occasions; like a current of clear water (to keep closely to the thoughts of Plutarch), which running through banks differently turned, complies with all their turns backward and forward, without changing any thing of its nature or its purity. Plutarch mentions it as a part of the merit of Menander, that he began very young, and was stopped only by old age, at a time

when he would have produced the greatest wonders, if death had not prevented him. This, joined to a reflection, which he makes as he returns to Aristophanes, shows that Aristophanes continued a long time to display his powers: for his poetry, says Plutarch, is a strumpet that affects sometimes the airs of a prude, but whose impudence cannot be forgiven by the people, and whose affected modesty is despised by men of decency. Menander, on the contrary, always shows himself a man agreeable and witty, a companion desirable upon the stage, at table, and in gay assemblies; an extract of all the treasures of Greece, who deserves always to be read, and always to please. His irresistible power of persuasion, and the reputation which he has had, of being the best master of language of Greece, sufficiently shows the delightfulness of his style. Upon this article of Menander, Plutarch does not know how to make an end; he says, that he is the delight of philosophers fatigued with study; that they use his works as a meadow enamelled with flowers, where a purer air gratifies the sense; that notwithstanding the powers of the other comick poets of Athens, Menander has always been considered as possessing a salt peculiar to himself, drawn from the same waters that gave birth to Venus. That, on the contrary, the salt of Aristophanes is bitter, keen, coarse, and corrosive; that one cannot tell whether his dexterity, which has been so much boasted, consists not more in the characters than in the expression, for he is charged with playing often upon words, with affecting antithetical allusions; that he has spoiled the copies which he endeavoured to take

after nature; that artifice in his plays is wickedness, and simplicity, brutishness; that his jocularity ought to raise hisses rather than laughter; that his amours have more impudence than gaiety; and that he has not so much written for men of understanding, as for minds blackened with envy and corrupted with debauchery.

The justification of Aristophanes.

X. After such a character there seems no need of going further; and one would think that it would be better to bury for ever the memory of so hateful a writer, that makes us so poor a recompense for the loss of Menander, who cannot be recalled. But, without showing any mercy to the indecent or malicious sallies of Aristophanes, any more than to Plautus his imitator, or at least the inheritor of his genius, may it not be allowed us to do, with respect to him, what, if I mistake not, Lucretius* did to Ennius, from whose muddy verses he gathered jewels? *Enni de stercore gemmas.*

Besides, we must not believe that Plutarch, who lived more than four ages after Menander, and more than five after Aristophanes, has passed so exact a judgment upon both, but that it may be fit to re-examine it. Plato, the contemporary of Aristophanes, thought very differently, at least of his genius; for, in his piece called "The Entertainment," he gives that poet a distinguished place, and makes him speak, according to his character, with Socrates himself; from which, by the way, it is apparent that this dialogue of Plato was

* Brumoy has mistaken Lucretius for Virgil.

composed before the time that Aristophanes wrote his "Clouds" against Socrates. Plato is likewise said to have sent a copy of Aristophanes to Dionysius the tyrant, with advice to read it diligently, if he would attain a complete judgment of the state of the Athenian republick.

Many other scholars have thought that they might depart somewhat from the opinion of Plutarch. Frischlinus, for example, one of the commentators upon Aristophanes, though he justly allows his taste to be less pure than that of Menander, has yet undertaken his defence against the outrageous censure of the ancient critick. In the first place, he condemns without mercy his ribaldry and obscenity. But this part, so worthy of contempt, and written only for the lower people, according to the remark of Boivin, bad as it is, after all is not the chief part which is left of Aristophanes. I will not say with Frischlinus, that Plutarch seems in this to contradict himself, and in reality commends the poet when he accuses him of having adapted his language to the stage; by the stage, in this place he meant the theatre of Farces, on which low mirth and buffoonery was exhibited. This plea of Frischlinus is a mere cavil; and though the poet had obtained his end, which was to divert a corrupted populace, he would not have been less a bad man, nor less a despicable poet, notwithstanding the excuse of his defender. To be able in the highest degree to divert fools and libertines, will not make a poet: it is not, therefore, by this defence that we must justify the character of Aristophanes. The depraved taste of the crowd, who once drove away Cratinus and his

company, because the scenes had not low buffoonery enough for their taste, will not justify Aristophanes, since Menander found a way of changing the taste by giving a sort of comedy, not indeed so modest as Plutarch represents it, but less licentious than before. Nor is Aristophanes better justified by the reason which he himself offers, when he says, that he exhibited debauchery upon the stage, not to corrupt the morals, but to mend them. The sight of gross faults is rather a poison than a remedy.

The apologist has forgot one reason, which appears to me to be essential to a just account. As far as we can judge by appearance, Plutarch had in his hands all the plays of Aristophanes, which were at least fifty in number. In these he saw more licentiousness than has come to our hands, though in the eleven that are still remaining, there is much more than could be wished.

Plutarch censures him in the second place for playing upon words; and against this charge Frischlinus defends him with less skill. It is impossible to exemplify this in French. But after all, this part is so little, that it deserved not so severe a reprehension, especially since amongst those sayings, there are some so mischievously malignant, that they became proverbial, at least by the sting of their malice, if not by the delicacy of their wit. One example will be sufficient: speaking of the tax-gatherers, or the excisemen of Athens, he crushes them at once by observing, *non quod essent* ταμιαὶ *sed* λαμιαὶ. The word *lamiæ* signified *walking spirits*, which, according to the vulgar notion, devoured men; this

makes the spirit of the sarcasm against the tax-gatherers. This cannot be rendered in our language; but if any thing as good had been said in France on the like occasion, it would have lasted too long, and, like many other sayings amongst us, been too well received. The best is, that Plutarch himself confesses that it was extremely applauded.

The third charge is, a mixture of tragick and comick style. This accusation is certainly true; Aristophanes often gets into the buskin: but we must examine upon what occasion. He does not take upon him the character of a tragick writer; but, having remarked that his trick of parody was always well received by a people who liked to laugh at that for which they had been just weeping, he is eternally using the same craft; and there is scarcely any tragedy or striking passage known by memory by the Athenians, which he does not turn into merriment, by throwing over it a dress of ridicule and burlesque, which is done sometimes by changing or transposing the words, and sometimes by an unexpected application of the whole sentence. These are the shreds of tragedy, in which he arrays the comick muse, to make her still more comick. Cratinus had before done the same thing; and we know that he made a comedy called "Ulysses," to burlesque Homer and his Odyssey; which shows, that the wits and poets are, with respect to one another, much the same at all times, and that it was at Athens as here. I will prove this system by facts, particularly with respect to the merriment of Aristophanes upon our three celebrated tragedians. This being the case, the mingled style

of Aristophanes will, perhaps, not deserve so much censure as Plutarch has vented. We have no need of the Travesty of Virgil, nor the parodies of our own time, nor of the Lutrin of Boileau, to show us that this medley may have its merit upon particular occasions.

The same may be said in general of his obscurity, his meannesses, and his high flights, and of all the seeming inequality of style, which puts Plutarch in a rage. These censures can never be just upon a poet, whose style has always been allowed to be perfectly Attick, and of an Atticism which made them extremely delightful to the lovers of the Athenian taste. Plutarch, perhaps, rather means to blame the choruses, of which the language is sometimes elevated, sometimes burlesque, always very poetical, and therefore in appearance not suitable to comedy. But the chorus, which had been borrowed from tragedy, was then all the fashion, particularly for pieces of satire, and Aristophanes admitted them like the other poets of the old, and perhaps of the middle comedy; whereas Menander suppressed them, not so much in compliance with his own judgment, as in obedience to the publick edicts. It is not, therefore, this mixture of tragick and comick that will place Aristophanes below Menander.

The fifth charge is, that he kept no distinction of character; that, for example, he makes women speak like orators, and orators like slaves: but it appears by the characters which he ridicules, that this objection falls of itself. It is sufficient to say, that a poet who painted, not imaginary characters,

but real persons, men well known, citizens whom he called by their names, and showed in dresses like their own, and masks resembling their faces, whom he branded in the sight of a whole city, extremely haughty and full of derision; it is sufficient to say, that such a poet could never be supposed to miss his characters. The applause, which his licentiousness produced, is too good a justification; besides, if he had not succeeded, he exposed himself to the fate of Eupolis, who, in a comedy called "The Drowned Man," having imprudently pulled to pieces particular persons more powerful than himself, was laid hold of, and drowned more effectually than those he had drowned upon the open stage.

The condemnation of the poignancy of Aristophanes, as having too much acrimony, is better founded. Such was the turn of a species of comedy, in which all licentiousness was allowed: in a nation which made every thing a subject of laughter, in its jealousy of immoderate liberty, and its enmity to all appearance of rule and superiority; for the genius of independency naturally produces a kind of satire more keen than delicate, as may be easily observed in most of the inhabitants of islands. If we do not say with Longinus, that a popular government kindles eloquence, and that a lawful monarchy stifles it; at least it is easy to discover by the event, that eloquence in different governments takes a different appearance. In republicks it is more spritely and violent, and in monarchies more insinuating and soft. The same thing may be said of ridicule: it follows the cast of genius, as genius follows that of government.

Thus the republican raillery, particularly of the age which we are now considering, must have been rougher than that of the age which followed it, for the same reason that Horace is more delicate, and Lucilius more pointed. A dish of satire was always a delicious treat to human malignity; but that dish was differently seasoned, as the manners were polished more or less. By polished manners I mean that good-breeding, that art of reserve and self-restraint, which is the consequence of dependence. If one was to determine the preference due to one of those kinds of pleasantry, of which both have their value, there would not need a moment's hesitation, every voice would join in favour of the softer, yet without contempt of that which is rough. Menander will, therefore, be preferred, but Aristophanes will not be despised, especially since he was the first who quitted that wild practice of satirising at liberty right or wrong, and by a comedy of another cast made way for the manner of Menander, more agreeable yet, and less dangerous. There is yet another distinction to be made between the acrimony of the one, and the softness of the other; the works of the one are acrimonious, and of the other soft, because the one exhibited personal, and the other general characters; which leaves us still at liberty to examine, if these different designs might not be executed with equal delicacy.

We shall know this by a view of the particulars; in this place we say only that the reigning taste, or the love of striking likenesses, might justify Aristophanes for having turned, as Plutarch says, ἀρτ into

malignity, simplicity into brutality, merriment into farce, and amour into impudence; if in any age a poet could be excused for painting publick folly and vice in their true colours.

There is a motive of interest at the bottom which disposed Elian, Plutarch, and many others, to condemn this poet without appeal. Socrates, who is said to have been destroyed by a poetical attack, at the instigation of two wretches*, has too many friends among good men, to have pardon granted to so horrid a crime. This has filled them with an implacable hatred against Aristophanes, which is mingled with the spirit of philosophy, a spirit, wherever it comes, more dangerous than any other. A common enemy will confess some good qualities in his adversary; but a philosopher, made partial by philosophy, is never at rest till he has totally destroyed him who has hurt the most tender part of his heart; that is, has disturbed him in his adherence to some character, which, like that of Socrates, takes possession of the mind. The mind is the freest part of man, and the most tender of its liberties: possessions, life, and reputation, may be in another's power, but opinion is always independent. If any man can obtain that gentle influence, by which he ingratiates himself with the understanding, and makes a sect in a commonwealth, his followers will sacrifice themselves for him, and nobody will be pardoned that dares to attack him justly or unjustly, because that truth,

* It is not certain, that Aristophanes did procure the death of Socrates; but, however, he is certainly criminal for having, in "The Clouds," accused him publickly of impiety.

real or imaginary, which he maintained, is now become an idol. Time will do nothing for the extinction of this hatred; it will be propagated from age to age; and there is no hope that Aristophanes will ever be treated with tenderness by the disciples of Plato, who made Socrates his hero. Every body else may, perhaps, confess, that Aristophanes, though in one instance a bad man, may nevertheless be a good poet; but distinctions, like these, will not be admitted by prejudice and passion, and one or other dictates all characters, whether good or bad.

As I add my own reasons, such as they are, for or against Aristophanes, to those of Frischlinus his defender, I must not omit one thing which he has forgot, and which, perhaps, without taking in the rest, put Plutarch out of humour, which is that perpetual farce which goes through all the comedies of Aristophanes, like the character of Harlequin on the Italian theatre. What kind of personages are clouds, frogs, wasps, and birds? Plutarch, used to a comick stage of a very different appearance, must have thought them strange things; and yet stranger must they appear to us who have a newer kind of comedy, with which the Greeks were unacquainted. This is what our poet may be charged with, and what may be proved beyond refutation. This charge comprises all the rest, and against this I shall not pretend to justify him. It would be of no use to say, that Aristophanes wrote for an age that required shows which filled the eye, and grotesque paintings in satirical performances; that the crowds of spectators, which sometimes neglected

Cratinus to throng Aristophanes, obliged him more and more to comply with the ruling taste, lest he should lose the publick favour by pictures more delicate and less striking; that, in a state, where it was considered as policy to lay open every thing that had the appearance of ambition, singularity, or knavery, comedy was become a haranguer, a reformer, and a publick counsellor, from whom the people learned to take care of their most valuable interests; and that this comedy, in the attempt to lead and to please the people, claimed a right to the strongest touches of eloquence, and had likewise the power of personal painting peculiar to herself. All these reasons, and many others, would disappear immediately, and my mouth would be stopped with a single word, with which every body would agree: my antagonist would tell me that such an age was to be pitied, and passing on from age to age, till he came to our own, he would conclude flatly, that we are the only possessors of common sense; a determination with which the French are too much reproached, and which overthrows all the prejudice in favour of antiquity. At the sight of so many happy touches, which one cannot help admiring in Aristophanes, a man might, perhaps, be inclined to lament that such a genius was thrown into an age of fools: but what age has been without them? And have not we ourselves reason to fear, lest posterity should judge of Moliere and his age, as we judge of Aristophanes? Menander altered the taste, and was applauded in Athens, but it was after Athens was changed. Terence imitated

him at Rome, and obtained the preference over Plautus, though Cæsar called him but a demi-Menander, because he appears to want that spirit and vivacity which he calls the *vis comica*. We are now weary of the manner of Menander and Terence, and leave them for Moliere, who appears like a new star in a new course. Who can answer, that in such an interval of time as has passed between these four writers there will not arise another author, or another taste, that may bring Moliere, in his turn, into neglect? Without going further, our neighbours, the English, think he wants force and fire. Whether they are right, or no, is another question; all that I mean to advance is, that we are to fix it as a conclusion, that comick authors must grow obsolete with the modes of life, if we admit any one age, or any one climate, for the sovereign rule of taste. But let us talk with more exactness, and endeavour by an exact analysis to find out what there is in comedy, whether of Aristophanes and Plautus, of Menander and Terence, of Moliere and his rivals, which is never obsolete, and must please all ages and all nations.

Remarkable difference between the state of Comedy, and other works of genius, with regard to their duration.

XI. I now speak particularly of comedy; for we must observe that between that and other works of literature, especially tragedy, there is an essential difference, which the enemies of antiquity will not understand, and which I shall endeavour palpably to show.

All works show the age in which they are pro-

duced; they carry its stamp upon them; the manners of the times are impressed by indelible marks. If it be allowed, that the best of past times were rude in comparison with ours, the cause of the ancients is decided against them; and the want of politeness, with which their works are charged in our days, must be generally confessed. History alone seems to claim exemption from this accusation. Nobody will dare to say of Herodotus or Thucydides, of Livius or Tacitus, that which has been said without scruple of Homer and the ancient poets. The reason is, that history takes the nearest way to its purpose, and gives the characters and practices of nations, be they what they will; it has no dependance upon its subject, and offers nothing to examination, but the art of the narrative. An history of China well written, would please a Frenchman as well as one of France. It is otherwise with mere works of genius, they depend upon their subjects, and consequently upon the characters and practices of the times in which they were written; this at least is the light in which they are beheld. This rule of judgment is not equitable; for, as I have said over and over, all the orators and the poets are painters, and merely painters. They exhibit nature as it is before them, influenced by the accidents of education, which without changing it entirely, yet give it, in different ages and climates, a different appearance; but we make their success depend in a great degree upon their subject, that is, upon circumstances which we measure by the circumstances of our own days. According to this

prejudice, oratory depends more upon its subject than history, and poetry yet more than oratory. Our times, therefore, show more regard to Herodotus and Suetonius, than to Demosthenes and Cicero, and more to all these than to Homer or Virgil. Of this prejudice, there are regular gradations; and to come back to the point which we have left, we show, for the same imperceptible reason, less regard to tragick poets than to others. The reason is, that the subjects of their paintings are more examined than the art. Thus comparing the "Achilles" and "Hippolytus" of Euripides, with those of Racine, we drive them off the stage, without considering that Racine's heroes will be driven off, in a future age, if the same rule of judgment be followed, and one time be measured by another.

Yet tragedy having the passions for its object, is not wholly exposed to the caprice of our taste, which would make our own manners the rule of human kind; for the passions of Grecian heroes are often dressed in external modes of appearance that disgust us, yet they break through the veil when they are strongly marked, as we cannot deny them to be in Eschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The essence then gets the better of the circumstance. The passions of Greece and France do not so much differ by the particular characters of particular ages, as they agree by the participation of that which belongs to the same passion in all ages. Our three tragick poets will, therefore, get clear by suffering only a little ridicule, which falls directly upon their times; but these times and themselves will be well recom-

pensed by the admiration which their art will irresistibly enforce.

Comedy is in a more lamentable situation; for, not only its object is the ridiculous, which, though in reality always the same, is so dependant on custom as to change its appearance with time, and with place; but the art of a comick writer is, to lay hold of that species of the ridiculous which will catch the spectators of the present hour, without regard to futurity. But, though comedy has attained its end, and diverted the pit, for which it was written; if it goes down to posterity, it is in a new world, where it is no longer known; it becomes there quite a foreigner, because there are no longer the same originals, nor the same species of the ridiculous, nor the same spectators, but a set of merciless readers, who complain that they are tired with it, though it once filled Athens, Rome, or Paris, with merriment. This position is general, and comprises all poets and all ages. To say all at once, comedy is the slave of its subject, and of the reigning taste; tragedy is not subject to the same degree of slavery, because the ends of the two species of poetry are different. For this reason, if we suppose that in all ages there are criticks who measure every thing by the same rule, it will follow, that if the comedy of Aristophanes be become obsolete, that of Menander likewise, after having delighted Athens, and revived again at Rome, at last suffered by the force of time. The Muse of Moliere has almost made both of them forgotten, and would still be walking the stage, if the

desire of novelty did not in time make us weary of that which we have too frequently admired.

Those who have endeavoured to render their judgment independent upon manners and customs, and of such men there have been always some, have not judged so severely either of times, or of writers; they have discovered that a certain resemblance runs through all polished ages, which are alike in essential things, and differ only in external manners, which, if we except religion, are things of indifference; that wherever there is genius, politeness, liberty, or plenty, there prevails an exact and delicate taste, which, however hard to be expressed, is felt by those that were born to feel it; that Athens, the inventress of all the arts, the mother first of the Roman and then of general taste, did not consist of stupid savages; that the Athenian and Augustan ages having always been considered as times that enjoyed a particular privilege of excellence, though we may distinguish the good authors from the bad, as in our own days, yet we ought to suspend the vehemence of criticism, and proceed with caution and timidity before we pass sentence upon times and writers, whose good taste has been universally applauded. This obvious consideration has disposed them to pause; they have endeavoured to discover the original of taste, and have found that there is not only a stable and immutable beauty, as there is a common understanding in all times and places, which is never obsolete; but there is another kind of beauty, such as we are now treating, which depends upon times and places, and is therefore changeable. Such is the

imperfection of every thing below, that one mode of beauty is never found without a mixture of the other, and from these two blended together results what is called the taste of an age. I am now speaking of an age spritely and polite, an age which leaves works for a long time behind it, an age which is imitated or criticised when revolutions have thrown it out of sight.

Upon this incontestable principle, which supposes a beauty universal and absolute, and a beauty likewise relative and particular, which are mingled through one work in very different proportions, it is easy to give an account of the contrary judgments passed on Aristophanes. If we consider him only with respect to the beauties, which, though they do not please us, delighted the Athenians, we shall condemn him at once, though even this sort of beauty may sometimes have its original in universal beauty carried to extravagance. Instead of commending him for being able to give merriment to the most refined nation of those days, we shall proceed to place that people, with all their atticism, in the rank of savages, whom we take upon us to degrade because they have no other qualifications but innocence and plain understanding. But have not we likewise, amidst our more polished manners, beauties merely fashionable, which make part of our writings as of the writings of former times; beauties of which our self-love now makes us fond, but which, perhaps, will disgust our grandsons? Let us be more equitable, let us leave this relative beauty to its real value more or less in every age: or, if we must pass judgment upon it, let

us say that these touches in Aristophanes, Menander, and Moliere, were well struck off in their own time; but that, comparing them with true beauty, that part of Aristophanes was a colouring too strong, that of Menander was too weak, and that of Moliere was a peculiar varnish formed of one and the other, which, without being an imitation, is itself inimitable, yet depending upon time, which will efface it by degrees, as our notions, which are every day changing, shall receive a sensible alteration. Much of this has already happened since the time of Moliere, who, if he was now to come again, must take a new road.

With respect to unalterable beauties, of which comedy admits much fewer than tragedy, when they are the subject of our consideration, we must not too easily set Aristophanes and Plautus below Menander and Terence. We may properly hesitate with Boileau, whether we shall prefer the French comedy to the Greek and Latin. Let us only give, like him, the great rule for pleasing in all ages, and the key by which all the difficulties in passing judgment may be opened. This rule and this key are nothing else but the ultimate design of the comedy.

> Etudiez la cour, & connoissez la ville:
> L'une & l'autre est toujours en modéles fertile.
> C'est par-là que Moliere illustrant ses écrits
> Peut-être de son art eût remporté le prix.
> Si moins ami du peuple en ses doctes peintures
> Il n'eût point fait souvent grimacer ses figures,
> Quitté pour le bouffon l'agréable & le fin,
> Et sans honte à Terence allié Tabarin*.

* Boileau, Art. Poet. chant. 3.

In truth, Aristophanes and Plautus united buffoonery and delicacy in a greater degree than Moliere; and for this they may be blamed. That which then pleased at Athens, and at Rome, was a transitory beauty, which had not sufficient foundation in truth, and therefore the taste changed. But, if we condemn those ages for this, what age shall we spare? Let us refer every thing to permanent and universal taste, and we shall find in Aristophanes at least as much to commend as censure.

Tragedy more uniform than Comedy.

XII. But before we go on to his works it may be allowed to make some reflections upon tragedy and comedy. Tragedy, though different according to the difference of times and writers, is uniform in its nature, being founded upon the passions, which never change. With comedy it is otherwise. Whatever difference there is between Eschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; between Corneille and Racine; between the French and the Greeks, it will not be found sufficient to constitute more than one species of tragedy.

The works of those great masters are, in some respects, like the sea-nymphs, of whom Ovid says, "That their faces were not the same, yet so much alike that they might be known to be sisters."

Facies non omnibus una,
Nec diversa tamen, qualem decet esse sororum.

The reason is, that the same passions give action and animation to them all. With respect to the comedies of Aristophanes and Plautus, Menander and Terence, Moliere and his imitators, if we compare

them one with another, we shall find something of a family likeness, but much less strongly marked, on account of the different appearance which ridicule and pleasantry take from the different manners of every age. They will not pass for sisters, but for very distant relations. The Muse of Aristophanes and Plautus, to speak of her with justice, is a bacchanal at least, whose malignant tongue is dipped in gall, or in poison dangerous as that of the aspic or viper; but whose bursts of malice, and sallies of wit, often give a blow where it is not expected. The Muse of Terence, and consequently of Menander, is an artless and unpainted beauty, of easy gaiety, whose features are rather delicate than striking, rather soft than strong, rather plain and modest than great and haughty, but always perfectly natural.

> Ce n'est pas un portrait, une image semblable:
> C'est un fils, un amant, un père véritable.

The Muse of Moliere is not always plainly dressed, but takes airs of quality, and rises above her original condition, so as to attire herself gracefully in magnificent apparel. In her manners she mingles elegance with foolery, force with delicacy, and grandeur, or even haughtiness, with plainness and modesty. If sometimes, to please the people, she gives a loose to farce, it is only the gay folly of a moment, from which she immediately returns, and which lasts no longer than a slight intoxication. The first might be painted encircled with little satyrs, some grossly foolish, the others delicate, but all extremely licentious and malignant; monkeys always ready to laugh in your face, and to point out to indiscriminate ridicule, the

good and the bad. The second may be shown encircled with geniuses full of softness and of candour, taught to please by nature alone, and whose honeyed dialect is so much the more insinuating as there is no temptation to distrust it. The last must be accompanied with the delicate laughter of the court, and that of the city somewhat more coarse, and neither the one nor the other can be separated from her. The Muse of Aristophanes and of Plautus can never be denied the honour of spriteliness, animation, and invention; nor that of Menander and Terence the praise of nature and of delicacy; to that of Moliere must be allowed the happy secret of uniting all the piquancy of the former, with a peculiar art which they did not know. Of these three sorts of merit, let us show to each the justice that is due, let us in each separate the pure and the true from the false gold, without approving or condemning either the one or the other in the gross. If we must pronounce in general upon the taste of their writings, we must indisputably allow that Menander, Terence, and Moliere, will give most pleasure to a decent audience, and consequently that they approach nearer to the true beauty, and have less mixture of beauties purely relative, than Plautus and Aristophanes.

If we distinguish comedy by its subjects, we shall find three sorts among the Greeks, and as many among the Latins, all differently dressed; if we distinguish it by ages and authors, we shall again find three sorts; and we shall find three sorts a third time if we regard more closely the subject. As the ultimate and general rules of all these sorts of comedy are the

he, it will, perhaps, be agreeable to our purpose to sketch them out before we give a full display of the last class. I can do nothing better on this occasion than transcribe the twenty-fifth reflection of Rapin upon poetry in particular.

General rules of Comedy.

XIII "Comedy," says he *, "is a representation of common life: its end is to show the faults of particular characters on the stage, to correct the disorder of the people by the fear of ridicule. Thus ridicule is the essential part of a comedy. Ridicule may be in words, or in things; it may be decent, or grotesque. To find what is ridiculous in every thing, is the gift merely of nature; for all the actions of life have their bright and their dark sides; something serious, and something merry. But Aristotle, who has given rules for drawing tears, has given none for raising laughter; for this is merely the work of nature, and must proceed from genius, with very little help from art or matter. The Spaniards have a turn to find the ridicule in things much more than we: and the Italians, who are natural comedians, have a better turn for expressing it; their language is more proper for it than ours, by an air of drollery which it can put on, and of which ours may become capable when it shall be brought nearer to perfection. In short, that agreeable turn, that gaiety which yet maintains the delicacy of its character without falling into dulness or into buffoonery, that elegant raillery which is the flower of fine wit, is the qualification

* Reflexions sur la Poët. p. 154, Paris, 1684.

which comedy requires. We must, however, remember that the true artificial ridicule, which is required on the theatre, must be only a transcript of the ridicule which nature affords. Comedy is naturally written, when, being on the theatre, a man can fancy himself in a private family, or a particular part of the town, and meets with nothing but what he really meets with in the world; for it is no real comedy in which a man does not see his own picture, and find his own manners and those of the people among whom he lives. Menander succeeded only by this art among the Greeks: and the Romans, when they sat at Terence's comedies, imagined themselves in a private party; for they found nothing there which they had not been used to find in common company. The great art of comedy is to adhere to nature without deviation; to have general sentiments and expressions which all the world can understand; for the writer must keep it always in his mind, that the coarsest touches after nature will please more than the most delicate with which nature is inconsistent. However, low and mean words should never be allowed upon the stage, if they are not supported with some kind of wit. Proverbs and vulgar smartnesses can never be suffered, unless they have something in them of nature and pleasantry. This is the universal principle of comedy; whatever is represented in this manner must please, and nothing can ever please without it. It is by application to the study of nature alone that we arrive at probability, which is the only infallible guide to theatrical success: without this probability every thing is defective, and that which has it, is beautiful: he that

follows this, can never go wrong; and the most common faults of comedy proceed from the neglect of propriety, and the precipitation of incidents. Care must likewise be taken that the hints, made use of to introduce the incidents, are not too strong, that the spectator may enjoy the pleasure of finding out their meaning: but commonly the weak place in our comedy is the untying of the plot, in which we almost always fail, on account of the difficulty which there is in disentangling of what has been perplexed. To perplex an intrigue is easy, the imagination does it by itself; but it must be disentangled merely by the judgment, and is, therefore, seldom done happily: and he that reflects a very little, will find that most comedies are faulty by an unnatural catastrophe. It remains to be examined whether comedy will allow pictures larger than the life, that this strength of the strokes may make a deeper impression upon the mind of the spectators; that is, if a poet may make a covetous man more covetous, and a peevish man more impertinent and more troublesome than he really is. To which I answer, that this was the practice of Plautus, whose aim was to please the people; but that Terence, who wrote for gentlemen, confined himself within the compass of nature, and represented vice without addition or aggravation. However, these extravagant characters, such as the "Citizen turned Gentleman," and the "Hypochondriac Patient" of Moliere, have lately succeeded at court, where delicacy is carried so far; but every thing, even to provincial interludes, is well received if it has but merriment, for we had rather laugh than

admire. These are the most important rules of comedy."

Three sorts of Comedy.

XIV. These rules, indeed, are common to the three kinds which I have in my mind; but it is necessary to distinguish each from the rest, which may be done by diversity of matter, which always makes some diversity of management. The old and middle comedy simply represented real adventures: in the same way some passages of history and of fable might form a class of comedies, which should resemble it without having its faults; such is the "Amphitryon." How many moral tales, how many adventures ancient and modern, how many little fables of Æsop, of Phædrus, of Fontaine, or some other ancient poet, would make pretty exhibitions, if they were all made use of as materials by skilful hands? And have we not seen some like "Timon the Man Hater," that have been successful in this way? This sort chiefly regards the Italians. The ancient exhibition called a satyre, because the satyrs played their part in it, of which we have no other instance than the "Cyclops" of Euripides, has, without doubt, given occasion to the pastoral comedies, for which we are chiefly indebted to Italy, and which are there more cultivated than in France. It is, however, a kind of exhibition that would have its charms, if it was touched with elegance and without meanness; it is the pastoral put into action. To conclude, the new comedy, invented by Menander, has produced the comedy properly so called in our times. This is that which has for its subject general pictures of

common life, and feigned names and adventures, whether of the court or of the city. This third kind is incontestably the most noble, and has received the strongest sanction from custom. It is likewise the most difficult to perform, because it is merely the work of invention, in which the poet has no help from real passages, or persons, which the tragick poet always makes use of. Who knows but by deep thinking, another kind of comedy may be invented wholly different from the three which I have mentioned? such is the fruitfulness of comedy: but its course is already too wide for the discovery of new fields to be wished, and on ground where we are already so apt to stumble, nothing is so dangerous as novelty imperfectly understood. This is the rock on which men have often split in every kind of pursuit; to go no further, in that of grammar and language: it is better to endeavour after novelty in the manner of expressing common things, than to hunt for ideas out of the way, in which many a man loses himself. The ill success of that odd composition Tragick Comedy, a monster wholly unknown to antiquity, sufficiently shows the danger of novelty in attempts like these.

Whether Tragedy or Comedy be the harder to write.

XV. To finish the parallel of the two dramas, a question may be revived equally common and important, which has been oftener proposed than well decided: it is, whether comedy or tragedy be most easy or difficult to be well executed. I shall not have the temerity to determine positively a question which so

many great geniuses have been afraid to decide: but if it be allowed to every literary man to give his reason for and against a mere work of genius, considered without respect to its good or bad tendency, I shall in a few words give my opinion, drawn from the nature of the two works, and the qualifications they demand. Horace* proposes a question nearly of the same kind: "It has been inquired, whether a good poem be the work of art or nature: for my part, I do not see much to be done by art without genius, nor by genius without knowledge. The one is necessary to the other, and the success depends upon their co-operation." If we should endeavour to accommodate matters in imitation of this decision of Horace, it were easy to say at once, that supposing two geniuses equal, one tragick and the other comick, supposing the art likewise equal in each, one would be as easy or difficult as the other; but this, though satisfactory in the simple question put by Horace, will not be sufficient here. Nobody can doubt but genius and industry contribute their part to every thing valuable, and particularly to good poetry. But if genius and study were to be weighed one against the other, in order to discover which must contribute most to a good work, the question would become more curious, and, perhaps, very difficult of solution. Indeed, though nature must have a great part of the expense of poetry, yet no poetry lasts long that is not very correct: the balance, therefore, seems to incline in favour of correction. For is it not known that Virgil with less genius than Ovid, is yet valued more by men

* Poet. v. 407.

of exquisite judgment; or, without going so far, Boileau, the Horace of our time, who composed with so much labour, and asked Moliere where he found his rhyme so easily, has said, "If I write four words, I shall blot out three;" has not Boileau, by his polished lines, retouched and retouched a thousand times, gained the preference above the works of the same Moliere, which are so natural, and produced by so fruitful a genius! Horace was of that opinion, for when he is teaching the writers of his age the art of poetry, he tells them in plain terms, that Rome would excel in writing as in arms, if the poets were not afraid of the labour, patience, and time required to polish their pieces. He thought every poem was bad that had not been brought ten times back to the anvil, and required that a work should be kept nine years, as a child is nine months in the womb of its mother, to restrain that natural impatience which combines with sloth and self love to disguise faults; so certain is it that correction is the touchstone of writing.

The question proposed comes back to the comparison which I have been making between genius and correction, since we are now engaged in enquiring whether there is more or less difficulty in writing tragedy or comedy: for as we must compare nature and study one with another, since they must both concur more or less to make a poet; so if we will compare the labours of two different minds in different kinds of writing, we must, with regard to the authors, compare the force of genius, and with respect to the composition, the difficulties of the task.

The genius of the tragick and comick writer will

be easily allowed to be remote from each other. Every performance, be what it will, requires a turn of mind which a man cannot confer upon himself: it is purely the gift of nature, which determines those who have it, to pursue, almost in spite of themselves, the taste which predominates in their minds. Pascal found in his childhood that he was a mathematician, and Vandyke that he was born a painter. Sometimes this internal direction of the mind does not make such evident discoveries of itself; but it is rare to find Corneilles who have lived long without knowing that they were poets. Corneille having once got some notion of his powers, tried a long time on all sides to know what particular direction he should take. He had first made an attempt in comedy, in an age when it was yet so gross in France that it could give no pleasure to polite persons. "Melite" was so well received when he dressed her out, that she gave rise to a new species of comedy and comedians. This success, which encouraged Corneille to pursue that sort of comedy of which he was the first inventor, left him no reason to imagine, that he was one day to produce those master-pieces of tragedy, which his muse displayed afterwards with so much splendour; and yet less did he imagine, that his comick pieces, which, for want of any that were preferable, were then very much in fashion, would be eclipsed by another genius * formed upon the Greeks and Romans, and who would add to their excellencies improvements of his own, and that this modish comedy, to which Corneille, as to his idol, dedicated his labours, would

* Moliere.

quickly be forgot. He wrote first "Medea," and afterwards "The Cid," and, by that prodigious flight of his genius he discovered, though late, that nature had formed him to run in no other course but that of Sophocles. Happy genius! that, without rule or imitation, could at once take so high a flight; having once, as I may say, made himself an eagle, he never afterwards quitted the path which he had worked out for himself, over the heads of the writers of his time: yet he retained some traces of the false taste which infected the whole nation; but even in this, he deserves our admiration, since in time he changed it completely by the reflections he made, and those he occasioned. In short, Corneille was born for tragedy, as Moliere for comedy. Moliere, indeed, knew his own genius sooner, and was not less happy in procuring applause, though it often happened to him as to Corneille,

> "L'Ignorance & l'Erreur à ses naissantes pièces
> En habit de Marquis, en robes de Comtesses,
> Vinssent pour diffamer son chef-d'œuvre nouveau,
> Et secoüer la tête à l'endroit le plus beau."

But, without taking any farther notice of the time at which either came to the knowledge of his own genius, let us suppose that the powers of tragedy and comedy were as equally shared between Moliere and Corneille, as they are different in their own nature, and then nothing more will remain than to compare the several difficulties of each composition, and to rate those difficulties together which are common to both.

It appears, first, that the tragick poet has in his

subject an advantage over the comick, for he takes it from history; and his rival, at least in the more elevated and splendid comedy, is obliged to form it by his own invention. Now, it is not so easy as it might seem to find comick subjects capable of a new and pleasing form; but history is a source, if not inexhaustible, yet certainly so copious as never to leave the genius aground. It is true, that invention seems to have a wider field than history: real facts are limited in their number, but the facts which may be feigned have no end; but though, in this respect, invention may be allowed to have the advantage, is the difficulty of inventing to be accounted as nothing? To make a tragedy is to get materials together, and to make use of them like a skilful architect; but to make a comedy, is to build like Æsop in the air. It is in vain to boast that the compass of invention is as wide as the extent of desire; every thing is limited, and the mind of man like every thing else. Besides, invention must be in conformity to nature; but distinct and remarkable characters are very rare in nature herself. Moliere has got hold on the principal touches of ridicule. If any man should bring characters less strong, he will be in danger of dulness. Where comedy is to be kept up by subordinate personages, it is in great danger. All the force of a picture must arise from the principal persons, and not from the multitude clustered up together. In the same manner, a comedy, to be good, must be supported by a single striking character, and not by under-parts.

But, on the contrary, tragick characters are with-

out number, though of them the general outlines are limited; but dissimulation, jealousy, policy, ambition, desire of dominion, and other interests and passions, are various without end, and take a thousand different forms in different situations of history; so that as long as there is tragedy, there may be always novelty. Thus the jealous and dissembling Mithridates, so happily painted by Racine, will not stand in the way of a poet who shall attempt a jealous and dissembling Tiberius. The stormy violence of an Achilles will always leave room for the stormy violence of Alexander.

But the case is very different with avarice, trifling vanity, hypocrisy, and other vices, considered as ridiculous. It would be safer to double and treble all the tragedies of our greatest poets, and use all their subjects over and over, as has been done with Œdipus and Sophonisba, than to bring again upon the stage in five acts a Miser, a Citizen turned Gentleman, a Tartuffe, and other subjects sufficiently known. Not that these popular vices are less capable of diversification, or are less varied by different circumstances, than the vices and passions of heroes; but that if they were to be brought over again in comedies, they would be less distinct, less exact, less forcible, and, consequently, less applauded. Pleasantry and ridicule must be more strongly marked than heroism and pathos, which support themselves by their own force. Besides, though these two things of so different natures could support themselves equally in equal variety, which is very far from being the case; yet comedy,

as it now stands, consists not in incidents, but in characters. Now it is by incidents only that characters are diversified, as well upon the stage of comedy, as upon the stage of life. Comedy, as Moliere has left it, resembles the pictures of manners drawn by the celebrated La Bruyere. Would any man after him venture to draw them over again, he would expose himself to the fate of those who have ventured to continue them. For instance, what could we add to his character of the Absent Man? Shall we put him in other circumstances? The principal strokes of absence of mind will always be the same; and there are only those striking touches which are fit for a comedy, of which the end is painting after nature, but with strength and spriteliness like the designs of Callot. If comedy were among us what it is in Spain, a kind of romance, consisting of many circumstances and intrigues, perplexed and disentangled, so as to surprise; if it was nearly the same with that which Corneille practised in his time; if, like that of Terence, it went no farther than to draw the common portraits of simple nature, and show us fathers, sons, and rivals; notwithstanding the uniformity, which would always prevail, as in the plays of Terence, and probably in those of Menander, whom he imitated in his four first pieces, there would always be a resource found either in variety of incidents, like those of the Spaniards, or in the repetition of the same characters in the way of Terence: but the case is now very different, the publick calls for new characters and nothing else

Multiplicity of accidents, and the laborious contrivance of an intrigue, are not now allowed to shelter a weak genius that would find great conveniencies in that way of writing. Nor does it suit the taste of comedy, which requires an air less constrained, and such freedom and ease of manners as admits nothing of the romantick. She leaves all the pomp of sudden events to the novels, or little romances, which were the diversion of the last age. She allows nothing but a succession of characters resembling nature, and falling in without any apparent contrivance. Racine has likewise taught us to give to tragedy the same simplicity of air and action; he has endeavoured to disentangle it from that great number of incidents, which made it rather a study than diversion to the audience, and which show the poet not so much to abound in invention, as to be deficient in taste. But, notwithstanding all that he has done, or that we can do, to make it simple, it will always have the advantage over comedy in the number of its subjects, because it admits more variety of situations and events, which give variety and novelty to the characters. A miser, copied after nature, will always be the miser of Plautus or Moliere; but a Nero, or a prince like Nero, will not always be the hero of Racine. Comedy admits of so little intrigue, that the miser cannot be shown in any such position as will make his picture new; but the great events of tragedy may put Nero in such circumstances as to make him wholly another character.

But, in the second place, over and above the subjects, may we not say something concerning the final purpose of comedy and tragedy? The purpose of the one is to divert, and the other to move; and of these two, which is the easier? To go to the bottom of those purposes; to move is to strike those strings of the heart which are most natural, terror and pity: to divert is to make one laugh, a thing which indeed is natural enough, but more delicate. The gentleman and the rustick have both sensibility and tenderness of heart, perhaps in greater or less degree; but as they are men alike, the heart is moved by the same touches. They both love likewise to send their thoughts abroad, and to expand themselves in merriment; but the springs which must be touched for this purpose, are not the same in the gentleman and the rustick. The passions depend on nature, and merriment upon education. The clown will laugh at a waggery, and the gentleman only at a stroke of delicate conceit. The spectators of a tragedy, if they have but a little knowledge, are almost all on a level; but with respect to comedy, we have three classes, if not more, the people, the learned, and the court. If there are certain cases in which all may be comprehended in the term people, this is not one of those cases. Whatever father Rapin may say about it, we are more willing even to admire than to laugh. Every man that has any power of distinction, laughs as rarely as the philosopher admires; for we are not to reckon those fits of laughter which are not incited by nature, and which are given merely to complaisance, to respect, flattery, and good-humour; such

as break out at sayings which pretend to smartness in assemblies. The laughter of the theatre is of another stamp. Every reader and spectator judges of wit by his own standard, and measures it by his capacity, or by his condition: the different capacities and conditions of men make them diverted on very different occasions. If, therefore, we consider the end of the tragick and comick poet, the comedian must be involved in much more difficultics, without taking in the obstructions to be encountered equally by both, in an art which consists in raising the passions, or the mirth of a great multitude. The tragedian has little to do but to reflect upon his own thought, and draw from his heart those sentiments which will certainly make their way to the hearts of others, if he found them in his own. The other must take many forms, and change himself almost into as many persons, as he undertakes to satisfy and divert.

It may be said, that, if genius be supposed equal, and success supposed to depend upon genius, the business will be equally easy and difficult to one author and to the other. The objection is of no weight; for the same question still recurs, which is, whether of these two kinds of genius is more valuable or more rare. If we proceed by example, and not by reasoning, we shall decide, I think, in favour of comedy.

It may be said, that, if merely art be considered, it will require deeper thoughts to form a plan just and simple; to produce happy surprises without apparent contrivance; to carry a passion skilfully through its gradations to its height; to arrive happily to the end

by always moving from it, as Ithaca seemed to fly Ulysses; to unite the acts and scenes; and to raise by insensible degrees a striking edifice, of which the least merit shall be exactness of proportion. It may be added, that in comedy this art is infinitely less, for there the characters come upon the stage with very little artifice or plot: the whole scheme is so connected that we see it at once, and the plan and disposition of the parts make a small part of its excellence, in comparison of a gloss of pleasantry diffused over each scene, which is more the happy effect of a lucky moment, than of long consideration.

These objections, and many others, which so fruitful a subject might easily suggest, it is not difficult to refute; and if we were to judge by the impression made on the mind by tragedies and comedies of equal excellence, perhaps, when we examine those impressions, it will be found that a sally of pleasantry, which diverts all the world, required more thought than a passage which gave the highest pleasure in tragedy; and to this determination we shall be more inclined when a closer examination shall show us, that a happy vein of tragedy is opened and effused at less expense, than a well-placed witticism in comedy has required merely to assign its place.

It would be too much to dwell long upon such a digression; and as I have no business to decide the question, I leave both that and my arguments to the taste of each particular reader, who will find what is to be said for or against it. My purpose was only to say of comedy, considered as a work of genius, all that a man of letters can be supposed to deliver with-

out departing from his character, and without palliating in any degree the corrupt use which has been almost always made of an exhibition which in its nature might be innocent; but has been vicious from the time that it has been infected with the wickedness of men. It is not for publick exhibitions that I am now writing, but for literary enquiries. The stage is too much frequented, and books too much neglected. Yet it is to the literature of Greece and Rome that we are indebted for that valuable taste, which will be insensibly lost by the affected negligence which now prevails of having recourse to originals. If reason has been a considerable gainer, it must be confessed that taste has been somewhat a loser.

To return to Aristophanes. So many great men of antiquity, through a long succession of ages, down to our times, have set a value upon his works, that we cannot naturally suppose them contemptible, notwithstanding the essential faults with which he may be justly reproached. It is sufficient to say, that he was esteemed by Plato and Cicero; and to conclude by that which does him most honour, but still falls short of justification, the strong and spritely eloquence of St. Chrysostom drew its support from the masculine and vigorous atticism of this sarcastic comedian, to whom the father paid the same regard as Alexander to Homer, that of putting his works under his pillow, that he might read them at night before he slept, and in the morning as soon as he awaked.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

TO

BRUMOY'S GREEK THEATRE.

Summary of the four articles treated of in this discourse.

I. Thus I have given a faithful extract of the remains of Aristophanes. That I have not shown them in their true form, I am not afraid that any body will complain. I have given an account of every thing as far as it was consistent with moral decency. No pen, however cynical or heathenish, would venture to produce in open day the horrid passages which I have put out of sight; and instead of regretting any part that I have suppressed, the very suppression will easily show to what degree the Athenians were infected with licentiousness of imagination and corruption of principles. If the taste of antiquity allows us to preserve what time and barbarity have hitherto spared, religion and virtue at least oblige us not to spread it before the eyes of mankind. To end this work in an useful manner, let us examine in a few words the four particulars which are most striking in the eleven pieces of Aristophanes.

Character of ancient Comedy.

II. The first is the character of the ancient comedy, which has no likeness to any thing in nature. Its genius is so wild and strange, that it scarce admits a definition. In what class of comedy must we place it? It appears to me to be a species of writing by itself. If we had Phrynicus, Plato, Eupolis, Cratinus, Ameipsias, and so many other celebrated rivals of Aristophanes, of whom all that we can find are a few fragments scattered in Plutarch, Athenæus, and Suidas, we might compare them with our poet, settle the general scheme, observe the minuter differences, and form a complete notion of their comick stage. But for want of all this we can fix only on Aristophanes, and it is true that he may be in some measure sufficient to furnish a tolerable judgment of the old comedy; for if we believe him, and who can be better credited? he was the most daring of all his brethren the poets, who practised the same kind of writing. Upon this supposition we may conclude, that the comedy of those days consisted in an allegory drawn out and continued; an allegory never very regular, but often ingenious, and almost always carried beyond strict propriety, of satire keen and biting, but diversified, spritely, and unexpected; so that the wound was given before it was perceived. Their points of satire were thunderbolts, and their wild figures, with their variety and quickness, had the effect of lightning. Their imitation was carried even to resemblance of persons, and their common entertain-

ments were a parody of rival poets joined, if I may so express it, with a parody of manners and habits.

But it would be tedious to draw out to the reader that which he will already have perceived better than myself. I have no design to anticipate his reflections; and therefore shall only sketch the picture, which he must finish by himself: he will pursue the subject farther, and form to himself a view of the common and domestick life of the Athenians, of which this kind of comedy was a picture, with some aggravation of the features: he will bring within his view all the customs, manners, and vices, and the whole character of the people of Athens. By bringing all these together he will fix in his mind an indelible idea of a people in whom so many contrarieties were united, and who in a manner that can scarce be expressed, connected nobility with the cast of Athens, wisdom with madness, rage for novelty with a bigotry for antiquity, the politeness of a monarchy with the roughness of a republick, refinement with coarseness, independence with slavery, haughtiness with servile compliance, severity of manners with debauchery, a kind of irreligion with piety. We shall do this in reading; as in travelling through different nations we make ourselves masters of their characters by combining their different appearances, and reflecting upon what we see.

The government of the Athenians.

III. The government of Athens makes a fine part of the ancient comedy. In most states the mystery of government is confined within the walls of the

cabinets; even in commonwealths it does not pass but through five or six heads, who rule those that think themselves the rulers. Oratory dares not touch it, and comedy still less. Cicero himself did not speak freely upon so nice a subject as the Roman commonwealth; but the Athenian eloquence was informed of the whole secret, and searches the recesses of the human mind, to fetch it out and expose it to the people. Demosthenes, and his contemporaries, speak with a freedom at which we are astonished, notwithstanding the notion we have of a popular government; yet at what time but this did comedy adventure to claim the same rights with civil eloquence? The Italian comedy of the last age, all daring as it was, could for its boldness come into no competition with the ancient. It was limited to general satire, which was sometimes carried so far, that the malignity was overlooked in an attention to the wild exaggeration, the unexpected strokes, the pungent wit, and the malignity concealed under such wild flights as became the character of Harlequin. But though it so far resembled Aristophanes, our age is yet at a great distance from his, and the Italian comedy from his scenes. But with respect to the liberty of censuring the government, there can be no comparison made of one age or comedy with another. Aristophanes is the only writer of his kind, and is for that reason of the highest value. A powerful state set at the head of Greece, is the subject of his merriment, and that merriment is allowed by the state itself. This appears to us an inconsistency; but it is true that it was the interest of the state to allow it,

though not always without inconveniency. It was a restraint upon the ambition and tyranny of single men, a matter of great importance to a people so very jealous of their liberty. Cleon, Alcibiades, Lamachus, and many other generals and magistrates, were kept under by fear of the comick strokes of a poet so little cautious as Aristophanes. He was once indeed in danger of paying dear for his wit. He professed, as he tells us himself, to be of great use by his writings to the state; and rated his merit so high as to complain that he was not rewarded. But, under pretence of this publick spirit, he spared no part of the publick conduct, neither was government, councils, revenues, popular assemblies, secret proceedings in judicature, choice of ministers, the government of the nobles, or that of the people, spared.

The "Acharnians," the "Peace," and the "Birds," are eternal monuments of the boldness of the poet, who was not afraid of censuring the government for the obstinate continuance of a ruinous war, for undertaking new ones, and feeding itself with wild imaginations, and running to destruction as it did for an idle point of honour.

Nothing can be more reproachful to the Athenians than his play of the "Knights," when he represents under an allegory that may be easily seen through, the nation of the Athenians as an old doting fellow tricked by a new man, such as Cleon and his companions, who were of the same stamp.

A single glance upon "Lysistrata," and the "Female Orators," must raise astonishment when the Athenian policy is set below the schemes of women,

whom the author makes ridiculous for no other reason than to bring contempt upon their husbands, who held the helm of government.

The "Wasps" is written to expose the madness of people for lawsuits and litigations; and a multitude of iniquities are laid open.

It may easily be gathered, that notwithstanding the wise laws of Solon, which they still professed to follow, the government was falling into decay, for we are not to understand the jest of Aristophanes in the literal sense. It is plain that the corruption, though we should suppose it but half as much as we are told, was very great, for it ended in the destruction of Athens, which could scarce raise its head again, after it had been taken by Lysander. Though we consider Aristophanes as a comick writer who deals in exaggeration, and bring down his stories to their true standard, we still find that the fundamentals of their government fail in almost all the essential points. That the people were inveigled by men of ambition; that all councils and decrees had their original in factious combinations; that avarice and private interest animated all their policy to the hurt of the publick; that their revenues were ill managed, their allies improperly treated; that their good citizens were sacrificed, and the bad put in places; that a mad eagerness for judicial litigation took up all their attention within, and that war was made without, not so much with wisdom and precaution, as with temerity and good luck; that the love of novelty and fashion in the manner of managing the publick affairs was a madness universally preva-

lent; and that Melanthius says in Plutarch, the republick of Athens was continued only by the perpetual discord of those that managed its affairs. This remedied the dishonour by preserving the equilibrium, and was kept always in action by eloquence and comedy.

This is what in general may be drawn from the reading Aristophanes. The sagacity of the readers will go farther: they will compare the different forms of government by which that tumultuous people endeavoured to regulate or increase the democracy, which forms were all fatal to the state, because they were not built upon lasting foundations, and had all in them the principles of destruction. A strange contrivance it was to perpetuate a state by changing the just proportion which Solon had wisely settled between the nobles and the people; and by opening a gate to the skilful ambition of those who had art or courage enough to force themselves into the government by means of the people, whom they flattered with protections that they might more certainly crush them.

The tragick Poets rallied.

IV. Another part of the works of Aristophanes are his pleasant reflections upon the most celebrated poets: the shafts which he lets fly at the three heroes of tragedy, and particularly at Euripides, might incline the reader to believe that he had little esteem for those great men; and that probably the spectators that applauded him were of his opinion. This conclusion would not be just, as I have already

shown by arguments, which, if I had not offered them, the reader might have discovered better than I. But that I may leave no room for objections, and prevent any shadow of captiousness, I shall venture to observe, that posterity will not consider Racine as less a master of the French stage because his plays were ridiculed by parodies. Parody always fixes upon the best pieces, and was more to the taste of the Greeks than to ours. At present the high theatres give it up to stages of inferior rank; but in Athens the comick theatre considered parody as its principal ornament, for a reason which is worth examining. The ancient comedy was not like ours, a remote and delicate imitation; it was the art of gross mimickry, and would have been supposed to have missed its aim, had it not copied the mien, the walk, the dress, the motions of the face of those whom it exhibited. Now parody is an imitation of this kind; it is a change of serious to burlesque, by a slight variation of words, inflection of voice, or an imperceptible art of mimickry. Parody is to poetry as a masque to a face. As the tragedies of Eschylus, of Sophocles, and of Euripides, were much in fashion, and were known by memory to the people, the parodies upon them would naturally strike and please, when they were accompanied by the grimaces of a good comedian, who mimicked with archness a serious character. Such is the malignity of human nature; we love to laugh at those whom we esteem most, and by this make ourselves some recompense for the unwilling homage which we pay to merit. The parodies upon these poets made by Aristophanes,

ought to be considered rather as encomiums than satires. They give us occasion to examine whether the criticisms are just or not in themselves: but what is more important, they afford no proof that Euripides or his predecessors wanted the esteem of Aristophanes or his age. The statues raised to their honour, the respect paid by the Athenians to their writings, and the careful preservation of those writings themselves, are immortal testimonies in their favour, and make it unnecessary for me to stop any longer upon so plausible a solution of so frivolous an objection.

Frequent ridicule of the Gods.

V. The most troublesome difficulty, and that which, so far as I know, has not yet been cleared to satisfaction, is the contemptuous manner in which Aristophanes treats the gods. Though I am persuaded in my own mind that I have found the true solution of this question, I am not sure that it will make more impression than that of M. Boivin, who contents himself with saying, that every thing was allowed to the comick poets; and that even Atheism was permitted to the licentiousness of the stage: that the Athenians applauded all that made them laugh; and believed that Jupiter himself laughed with them at the smart sayings of a poet. Mr. Collier, an Englishman, in his remarks upon their stage, attempts to prove that Aristophanes was an open Atheist. For my part I am not satisfied with the account either of one or the other, and think it better to venture a new system, of which I have already dropt some hints in this work. The truth is, that the Athenians pro-

fessed to be great laughers; always ready for merriment on whatever subject. But it cannot be conceived that Aristophanes should, without punishment, publish himself an Atheist, unless we suppose that Atheism was the opinion likewise of the spectators, and of the judges commissioned to examine the plays; and yet this cannot be suspected of those who boasted themselves the most religious nation, and naturally the most superstitious of all Greece. How can we suppose those to be Atheists who passed sentence upon Diagoras, Socrates, and Alcibiades, for impiety? These are glaring inconsistencies. To say like M. Boivin, for the sake of getting clear of the difficulty, that Alcibiades, Socrates, and Diagoras, attacked religion seriously, and were therefore not allowed, but that Aristophanes did it in jest, or was authorised by custom, would be to trifle with the difficulty, and not to clear it. Though the Athenians loved merriment, it is not likely that if Aristophanes had professed Atheism, they would have spared him more than Socrates, who had as much life and pleasantry in his discourses, as the poet in his comedies. The pungent raillery of Aristophanes, and the fondness of the Athenians for it, are therefore not the true reason why the poet was spared when Socrates was condemned. I shall now solve the question with great brevity.

The true answer to this question is given by Plutarch in his treatise of reading of the poets. Plutarch attempts to prove that youth is not to be prohibited the reading of the poets; but to be cautioned against such parts as may have bad effects. They are first

to be prepossessed with this leading principle, that poetry is false and fabulous. He then enumerates at length the fables which Homer and other poets have invented about their deities; and concludes thus: "When therefore there is found in poetical compositions any thing strange and shocking, with respect to gods, or demigods, or concerning the virtue of any excellent and renowned characters, he that should receive these fictions as truth would be corrupted by an erroneous opinion: but he that always keeps in his mind the fables and allusions, which it is the business of poetry to contrive, will not be injured by these stories, nor receive any ill impressions upon his thoughts, but will be ready to censure himself, if at any time he happens to be afraid, lest Neptune in his rage should split the earth, and lay open the infernal regions." Some pages afterwards, he tells us, "That religion is a thing difficult of comprehension, and above the understanding of poets; which it is," says he, "necessary to have in mind when we read their fables."

The Pagans therefore had their fables, which they distinguished from their religion; for no one can be persuaded that Ovid intended his Metamorphoses as a true representation of the religion of the Romans. The poets were allowed their imaginations about their gods, as things which have no regard to the publick worship. Upon this principle, I say, as I said before, there was amongst the Pagans two sorts of religion: one a poetical, and a real religion: one practical, the other theatrical: a mythology for the poets, a theology for use. They had fables, and a

worship, which, though founded upon fable, was yet very different.

Diagoras, Socrates, Plato, and the philosophers of Athens, with Cicero, their admirer, and the other pretended wise men of Rome, are men by themselves. These were the Atheists with respect to the ancients. We must not therefore look into Plato, or into Cicero, for the real religion of the Pagans, as distinct from the fabulous. These two authors involve themselves in the clouds, that their opinions may not be discovered. They durst not openly attack the real religion; but destroyed it by attacking fable.

To distinguish here with exactness the agreement or difference between fable and religion, is not at present my intention: it is not easy* to show with exactness what was the Athenian notion of the nature of the gods whom they worshipped. Plutarch himself tells us, that this was a thing very difficult for the philosophers. It is sufficient for me that the mythology and theology of the ancients were different at the bottom; that the names of the gods continued the same; and that long custom gave up one to the caprices of the poets, without supposing the other affected by them. This being once settled upon the authority of the ancients themselves, I am no longer surprised to see Jupiter, Minerva, Neptune, Bacchus, appear upon the stage in the comedy of Aristophanes; and at the same time receiving incense in the temples of Athens. This is, in my opinion, the most reasonable account of a thing so obscure; and I

* See St. Paul upon the subject of the *Ignoto Deo*.

am ready to give up my system to any other, by which the Athenians shall be made more consistent with themselves; those Athenians who sat laughing at the gods of Aristophanes, while they condemned Socrates for having appeared to despise the gods of his country.

The Mimi and Pantomimes.

VI. A word is now to be spoken of the *Mimi*, which had some relation to comedy. This appellation was, by the Greeks and Romans, given to certain dramatic performances, and to the actors that played them. The denomination sufficiently shows, that their art consisted in imitation and buffoonery. Of their works, nothing, or very little, is remaining: so that they can only be considered by the help of some passages in authors: from which little is to be learned that deserves consideration. I shall extract the substance, as I did with respect to the chorus, without losing time, by defining all the different species, or producing all the quotations, which would give the reader more trouble than instruction. He that desires fuller instructions may read Vossius, Valois, Saumaises, and Gataker, of whose compilations, however learned, I should think it shame to be the author.

The *Mimi* had their original from comedy, of which at its first appearance they made a part; for their mimick actors always played and exhibited grotesque dances in the comedies. The jealousy of rivalship afterwards broke them off from the comick actors, and made them a company by them-

selves. But to secure their reception, they borrowed from comedy all its drollery, wildness, grossness, and licentiousness. This amusement they added to their dances, and they produced what are now called farces, or burlettas. These farces had not the regularity or delicacy of comedies; they were only a succession of single scenes contrived to raise laughter; formed or unravelled without order and without connexion. They had no other end but to make the people laugh. Now and then there might be good sentences, like the sentences of P. Syrus, that are yet left us: but the groundwork was low comedy; and any thing of greater dignity drops in by chance. We must however imagine, that this odd species of the drama rose at length to somewhat a higher character, since we are told that Plato the philosopher laid the *Mimi* of Sophron under his pillow, and they were found there after his death. But in general we may say with truth, that it always discovered the meanness of its original, like a false pretension to nobility, in which the cheat is always discovered through the concealment of fictitious splendour.

These *Mimi* were of two sorts, of which the length was different, but the purposes the same. The *Mimi* of one species were short; those of the other long, and not quite so grotesque. These two kinds were subdivided into many species, distinguished by the dresses and characters, such as show drunkards, physicians, men, and women.

Thus far of the Greeks. The Romans having borrowed of them the more noble shows of tragedy and comedy, were not content till they had their rhapso-

dies. They had their *planipedes*, who played with flat soles, that they might have the more agility; and their *Sannions*, whose head was shaved, that they might box the better. There is no need of naming here all who had a name for these diversions among the Greeks and Romans. I have said enough, and perhaps too much of this abortion of comedy, which drew upon itself the contempt of good men, the censures of the magistrates, and the indignation of the fathers of the church.*

Another set of players were called *Pantomimes:* these were at least so far preferable to the former, that they gave no offence to the ears. They spoke only to the eyes; but with such art of expression, that without the utterance of a single word, they represented, as we are told, a complete tragedy or comedy, in the same manner as dumb Harlequin is exhibited on our theatres. These *Pantomimes* among the Greeks first mingled singing with their dances; afterwards, about the time of Livius Andronicus, the songs were performed by one part, and the dances by another. Afterwards, in the time of Augustus, when they were sent for to Rome, for the diversions of the people, whom he had enslaved, they played comedies without songs or vocal utterance; but by the spriteliness, activity, and efficacy of their gestures; or, as Sidonius Apollinaris expresses it, *clausis faucibus, et loquente gestu*, they not only

* It is the licentiousness of the *Mimi* and *Pantomimes*, against which the censure of the Holy Fathers particularly breaks out, as against a thing irregular and indecent, without supposing it much connected with the cause of religion.

exhibited things and passions, but even the most delicate distinctions of passions, and the slightest circumstances of facts. We must not however imagine, at least in my opinion, that the *Pantomimes* did literally represent regular tragedies or comedies by the mere motions of their bodies. We may justly determine, notwithstanding all their agility, their representations would at last be very incomplete: yet we may suppose, with good reason, that their action was very lively; and that the art of imitation went great lengths, since it raised the admiration of the wisest men, and made the people mad with eagerness. Yet when we read that one Hylus, the pupil of one Pylades, in the time of Augustus, divided the applauses of the people with his master, when they represented Oedipus, or when Juvenal tells us, that Bathillus played Leda, and other things of the same kind, it is not easy to believe that a single man, without speaking a word, could exhibit tragedies or comedies, and make starts and bounds supply the place of vocal articulation. Notwithstanding the obscurity of this whole matter, one may know what to admit as certain, or how far a representation could be carried by dance, posture, and grimace. Among these artificial dances, of which we know nothing but the names, there was as early as the time of Aristophanes some extremely indecent. These were continued in Italy from the time of Augustus, long after the emperors. It was a publick mischief, which contributed in some measure to the decay and ruin of the Roman empire. To have a due detestation of those licentious entertain-

ments, there is no need of any recourse to the fathers; the wiser Pagans tell us very plainly what they thought of them. I have made this mention of the Mimi and Pantomimes, only to show how the most noble of publick spectacles were corrupted and abused, and to conduct the reader to the end through every road, and through all the by-paths of human wit, from Homer and Eschylus to our own time.

Wanderings of the human mind in the birth and progress of theatrical representations.

VII. That we may conclude this work by applying the principles laid down at the beginning, and extend it through the whole, I desire the reader to recur to that point where I have represented the human mind as beginning the course of the drama. The chorus was first a hymn to Bacchus, produced by accident; art brought it to perfection, and delight made it a publick diversion. Thespis made a single actor play before the people; this was the beginning of theatrical shows. Eschylus, taking the idea of the Iliad and Odyssey, animated, if I may so express it, the epick poem, and gave a dialogue in place of simple recitation; puts the whole into action, and sets it before the eyes, as if it was a present and real transaction: he gives the chorus* an interest in the scenes, contrives habits of dignity and theatri-

* Eschylus, in my opinion, as well as the other poets his contemporaries, retained the chorus, not merely because it was the fashion, but because examining tragedy to the bottom, they found it not rational to conceive, that an action great and splendid, like the revolution of a state, could pass without witnesses.

cal decorations. In a word, he gives both to tragedy; or, more properly, draws it from the bosom of the epick poem. She made her appearance sparkling with graces, and displayed such majesty as gained every heart at the first view. Sophocles considers her more nearly, with the eyes of a critick, and finds that she has something still about her rough and swelling: he divests her of her false ornaments, teaches her a more regular walk, and more familiar dignity. Euripides was of opinion, that she ought to receive still more softness and tenderness; he teaches her the new art of pleasing by simplicity, and gives her the charms of graceful negligence; so that he makes her stand in suspense, whether she appears most to advantage in the dress of Sophocles sparkling with gems, or in that of Euripides, which is more simple and modest. Both indeed are elegant: but the elegance is of different kinds, between which no judgment as yet has decided the prize of superiority.

We can now trace it no farther; its progress amongst the Greeks is out of sight. We must pass at once to the time of Augustus, when Apollo and the Muses quitted their ancient residence in Greece, to fix their abode in Italy. But it is vain to ask questions of Melpomene; she is obstinately silent, and we only know from strangers her power amongst the Romans. Seneca endeavours to make her speak; but the gaudy show with which he rather loads than adorns her, makes us think that he took some phantom of Melpomene for the Muse herself.

Another flight, equally rapid with that to Rome, must carry us through thousands of years, from

Rome to France. There in the time of Lewis XIV. we see the mind of man giving birth to tragedy a second time, as if the Greek tragedy had been utterly forgot. In the place of Eschylus, we have our Rotrou. In Corneille we have another Sophocles, and in Racine a second Euripides. Thus is tragedy raised from her ashes, carried to the utmost point of greatness, and so dazzling that she prefers herself to herself. Surprised to see herself produced again in France in so short a time, and nearly in the same manner as before in Greece, she is disposed to believe that her fate is to make a short transition from her birth to her perfection, like the goddess that issued from the brain of Jupiter.

If we look back on the other side to the rise of comedy, we shall see it hatched by Margites from the Odyssey of Homer, in imitation of her eldest sister; but we see her under the conduct of Aristophanes become licentious and petulant, taking airs to herself which the magistrates were obliged to crush. Menander reduced her to bounds, taught her at once gaiety and politeness, and enabled her to correct vice, without shocking the offenders. Plautus, among the Romans, to whom we must now pass, united the earlier and the later comedy, and joined buffoonery with delicacy. Terence, who was better instructed, received comedy from Menander, and surpassed his original, as he endeavoured to copy it. And lastly, Moliere produced a new species of comedy, which must be placed in a class by itself, in opposition to that of Aristophanes, whose manner is likewise peculiar to himself.

But such is the weakness of the human mind, that when we review the successions of the drama a third time, we find genius falling from its height, forgetting itself, and led astray by the love of novelty, and the desire of striking out new paths. Tragedy degenerated in Greece from the time of Aristotle, and in Rome after Augustus. At Rome and Athens comedy produced *Mimi*, pantomimes, burlettas, tricks, and farces, for the sake of variety; such is the character, and such the madness of the mind of man. It is satisfied with having made great conquests, and gives them up to attempt others, which are far from answering its expectation, and only enable it to discover its own folly, weakness, and deviations. But why should we be tired with standing still at the true point of perfection, when it is attained? If eloquence be wearied, and forgets herself a while, yet she soon returns to her former point: so will it happen to our theatres if the French Muses will keep the Greek models in their view, and not look with disdain upon a stage whose mother is nature, whose soul is passion, and whose art is simplicity: a stage, which, to speak the truth, does not perhaps equal ours in splendour and elevation, but which excels it in simplicity and propriety, and equals it at least in the conduct and direction of those passions which may properly affect an honest man and a christian.

For my part I shall think myself well recompensed for my labour, and shall attain the end which I had in view, if I shall in some little measure revive in the minds of those who purpose to run the round of polite literature, not an immode-

rate and blind reverence, but a true taste of antiquity: such a taste as both feeds and polishes the mind, and enriches it by enabling it to appropriate the wealth of foreigners, and to exert its natural fertility in exquisite productions; such a taste as gave the Racines, the Molieres, the Boileaus, the Fontaines, the Patrus, the Pelissons, and many other great geniuses of the last age, all that they were, and all that they will always be; such a taste as puts the seal of immortality to those works in which it is discovered; a taste so necessary, that without it we may be certain that the greatest powers of nature will long continue in a state below themselves; for no man ought to allow himself to be flattered or seduced by the example of some men of genius, who have rather appeared to despise this taste than to despise it in reality. It is true that excellent originals have given occasion, without any fault of their own, to very bad copies. No man ought severely to ape either the ancients, or the moderns: but if it was necessary to run into an extreme of one side or the other, which is never done by a judicious and well-directed mind, it would be better for a wit, as for a painter, to enrich himself by what he can take from the ancients, than to grow poor by taking all from his own stock; or openly to affect an imitation of those moderns whose more fertile genius has produced beauties peculiar to themselves, and which themselves only can display with grace: beauties of that peculiar kind, that they are not fit to be imitated by others; though in those who first invented them they may be justly esteemed, and in them only.

DEDICATIONS.

Dr. JAMES'S MEDICINAL DICTIONARY.
3 vols. folio. 1743.

To DR. MEAD.

SIR,

THAT the Medicinal Dictionary is dedicated to you, is to be imputed only to your reputation for superior skill in those sciences which I have endeavoured to explain and facilitate: and you are, therefore, to consider this address, if it be agreeable to you, as one of the rewards of merit; and if otherwise, as one of the inconveniencies of eminence.

However you shall receive it, my design cannot be disappointed; because this publick appeal to your judgment will show that I do not found my hopes of approbation upon the ignorance of my readers, and that I fear his censure least, whose knowledge is most extensive.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

R. JAMES.

The FEMALE QUIXOTE. By Mrs. LENNOX. 1752.

To the Rt. Hon. the Earl of MIDDLESEX.

MY LORD,

SUCH is the power of interest over almost every mind, that no one is long without arguments to prove any position which is ardently wished to be true, or to justify any measures which are dictated by inclination.

By this subtil sophistry of desire, I have been persuaded to hope that this book may, without impropriety, be inscribed to your Lordship; but am not certain that my reasons will have the same force upon other understandings.

The dread which a writer feels of the publick censure; the still greater dread of neglect; and the eager wish for support and protection, which is impressed by the consciousness of imbecility, are unknown to those who have never adventured into the world; and I am afraid, my lord, equally unknown to those who have always found the world ready to applaud them.

'Tis therefore not unlikely that the design of this address may be mistaken, and the effects of my fear imputed to my vanity. They who see your lordship's name prefixed to my performance will rather condemn my presumption than compassionate my anxiety.

But, whatever be supposed my motive, the praise of judgment cannot be denied me: for, to whom can timidity so properly fly for shelter, as to him who has been so long distinguished for candour and humanity? How can vanity be so compleatly grati-

fied as by the allowed patronage of him, whose judgment has so long given a standard to the national taste? Or by what other means could I so powerfully suppress all opposition, but that of envy, as by declaring myself, My Lord,

Your Lordship's obliged and
most obedient Servant,
THE AUTHOR.

SHAKESPEAR Illustrated; or, The NOVELS and HISTORIES on which the Plays of SHAKESPEAR are founded; collected and translated from the original authors. With Critical Remarks. By the Author of the FEMALE QUIXOTE. 1753.

To the Right Hon. John Earl of ORRERY.

MY LORD,

I HAVE no other pretence to the honour of a patronage so illustrious as that of your lordship, than the merit of attempting what has by some unaccountable neglect been hitherto omitted, though absolutely necessary to a perfect knowledge of the abilities of Shakespear.

Among the powers that must conduce to constitute a poet, the first and most valuable is invention; the highest seems to be that which is able to produce a series of events. It is easy when the thread of a story is once drawn, to diversify it with variety of colours; and when a train of action is presented to the mind, a little acquaintance with life will supply circumstances and reflections, and a little knowledge of books furnish parallels and illustrations. To

tell over again a story that has been told already, and to tell it better than the first author, is no rare qualification; but to strike out the first hints of a new fable: hence to introduce a set of characters so diversified in their several passions and interests that from the clashing of this variety may result many necessary incidents: to make these incidents surprizing, and yet natural, so as to delight the imagination without shocking the judgment of a reader; and finally to wind up the whole in a pleasing catastrophe, produced by those very means which seem most likely to oppose and prevent it, is the utmost effort of the human mind.

To discover how few of those writers, who profess to recount imaginary adventures, have been able to produce any thing by their own imagination, would require too much of that time which your lordship employs in nobler studies. Of all the novels and romances that wit or idleness, vanity or indigence, have pushed into the world, there are very few of which the end cannot be conjectured from the beginning; or where the authors have done more than to transpose the incidents of other tales, or strip the circumstances from one event for the decoration of another.

In the examination of a poet's character, it is therefore first to be enquired what degree of invention has been exerted by him. With this view I have very diligently read the works of Shakespear, and now presume to lay the result of my searches before your lordship, before that judge whom Pliny himself would have wished for his assessor to hear a literary cause.

How much the translation of the following novels will add to the reputation of Shakespear, or take away from it, you, my lord, and men learned and candid like you, if any such can be found, must now determine. Some danger, I am informed, there is, lest his admirers should think him injured by this attempt, and clamour as at the diminution of the honour of that nation which boasts itself the parent of so great a poet.

That no such enemies may arise against me (though I am unwilling to believe it) I am far from being too confident, for who can fix bounds to bigotry and folly? My *sex*, my *age*, have not given me many opportunities of mingling in the world: there may be in it many a species of absurdity which I have never seen, and among them such vanity as pleases itself with false praise bestowed on another, and such superstition as worships idols, without supposing them to be gods.

But the truth is, that a very small part of the reputation of this mighty genius depends upon the naked plot or story of his plays. He lived in an age when the books of chivalry were yet popular, and when therefore the minds of his auditors were not accustomed to balance probabilities, or to examine nicely the proportion between causes and effects. It was sufficient to recommend a story, that it was far removed from common life, that its changes were frequent, and its close pathetic.

This disposition of the age concurred so happily with the imagination of Shakespear, that he had no desire to reform it; and indeed to this he was in-

debted for the licentious variety, by which he made his plays more entertaining than those of any other author.

He had looked with great attention on the scenes of nature: but his chief skill was in human actions, passions, and habits: he was therefore delighted with such tales as afforded numerous incidents, and exhibited many characters in many changes of situation. These characters are so copiously diversified, and some of them so justly pursued, that his works may be considered as a map of life, a faithful miniature of human transactions; and he that has read Shakespear with attention will perhaps find little new in the crowded world.

Among his other excellencies it ought to be remarked, because it has hitherto been unnoticed, that his *heroes are men*, that the love and hatred, the hopes and fears of his chief personages are such as are common to other human beings, and not like those which later times have exhibited, peculiar to phantoms that strut upon the stage.

It is not perhaps very necessary to enquire whether the vehicle of so much delight and instruction be a story probable or unlikely, native or foreign. Shakespear's excellence is not the fiction of a tale, but the representation of life: and his reputation is therefore safe, till human nature shall be changed. Nor can he, who has so many just claims to praise, suffer by losing that which ignorant admiration has unreasonably given him. To calumniate the dead is baseness, and to flatter them is surely folly.

From flattery, my lord, either of the dead or the

living, I wish to be clear, and have therefore solicited the countenance of a patron, whom, if I knew how to praise him, I could praise with truth, and have the world on my side; whose candour and humanity are universally acknowledged, and whose judgment perhaps was then first to be doubted, when he condescended to admit this address from,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged
and most obedient humble Servant,
THE AUTHOR.

PAYNE'S Introduction to the GAME of DRAUGHTS. 1756.

To the Right Hon. WILLIAM HENRY Earl of ROCHFORD, &c.

MY LORD,

WHEN I take the liberty of addressing to your lordship "A Treatise on the Game of Draughts," I easily foresee that I shall be in danger of suffering ridicule on one part, while I am gaining honour on the other, and that many who may envy me the distinction of approaching you, will deride the present I presume to offer.

Had I considered this little volume as having no purpose beyond that of teaching a game, I should indeed have left it to take its fate without a patron. Triflers may find or make any thing a trifle; but since it is the great characteristic of a wise man to see events in their causes, to obviate consequences, and ascertain contingencies, your lordship will think no-

thing a trifle by which the mind is inured to caution, foresight, and circumspection. The same skill, and often the same degree of skill, is exerted in great and little things, and your lordship may sometimes exercise, on a harmless game, those abilities which have been so happily employed in the service of your country.

I am, my Lord,
Your Lordship's most obliged, most obedient,
and most humble servant,
WILLIAM PAYNE.

The EVANGELICAL HISTORY of JESUS CHRIST harmonized, explained, and illustrated.
2 vols. 8vo. 1758.

To the LORDS Spiritual and Temporal, and COMMONS in Parliament assembled.

THAT we are fallen upon an age in which corruption is barely not universal, is universally confessed. Venality skulks no longer in the dark, but snatches the bribe in publick; and prostitution issues forth without shame, glittering with the ornaments of successful wickedness. Rapine preys on the publick without opposition, and perjury betrays it without enquiry. Irreligion is not only avowed but boasted; and the pestilence that used to walk in darkness, is now destroying at noon-day.

Shall this be the state of the English nation, and shall her law-givers behold it without regard? Must the torrent continue to roll on till it shall sweep us into the gulph of perdition? Surely there will come

a time when the careless shall be frighted, and the sluggish shall be roused: when every passion shall be put upon the guard by the dread of general depravity; when he who laughs at wickedness in his companion, shall start from it in his child: when the man who fears not for his soul, shall tremble for his possessions: when it shall be discovered that religion only can secure the rich from robbery, and the poor from oppression: can defend the state from treachery, and the throne from assassination.

If this time be ever to come, let it come quickly: a few years longer, and perhaps all endeavours will be vain. We may be swallowed by an earthquake, we may be delivered to our enemies, or abandoned to that discord, which must inevitably prevail among men that have lost all sense of divine superintendence, and have no higher motive of action or forbearance, than present opinion of present interest.

It is the duty of private men to supplicate and propose; it is yours to hear and to do right. Let religion be once more restored, and the nation shall once more be great and happy. This consequence is not far distant: that nation must always be powerful where every man performs his duty: and every man will perform his duty that considers himself as a being whose condition is to be settled to all eternity by the laws of Christ.

The only doctrine by which man can be made *wise unto salvation*, is the will of God revealed in the books of the Old and the New Testament.

To study the scriptures, therefore, according to his abilities and attainments, is every man's duty, and

to facilitate that study to those whom nature hath made weak, or education has left ignorant, or indispensable cares detain from regular processes of enquiry, is the business of those who have been blessed with abilities and learning, and are appointed the instructors of the lower classes of men, by that common father, who distributes to all created beings their qualifications and employments; who has allotted some to the labour of the hand, and some to the exercise of the mind; has commanded some to teach, and others to learn; has prescribed to some the patience of instruction, and to others the meekness of obedience.

By what methods the unenlightened and ignorant may be made proper readers of the word of God, has been long and diligently considered. Commentaries of all kinds have indeed been copiously produced: but there still remain multitudes to whom the labours of the learned are of little use, for whom expositions require an expositor. To those, indeed, who read the divine books without vain curiosity, or a desire to be wise beyond their powers, it will always be easy to discern the strait path, to find the words of everlasting life. But such is the condition of our nature, that we are always attempting what it is difficult to perform: he who reads the scripture to gain goodness, is desirous likewise to gain knowledge, and by his impatience of ignorance, falls into errour.

This danger has appeared to the doctors of the Romish church, so much to be feared, and so difficult to be escaped, that they have snatched the Bible

out of the hands of the people, and confined the liberty of perusing it to those whom literature has previously qualified. By this expedient they have formed a kind of uniformity, I am afraid too much like that of colours in the dark: but they have certainly usurped a power which God has never given them, and precluded great numbers from the highest spiritual consolation.

I know not whether this prohibition has not brought upon them an evil which they themselves have not discovered. It is granted, I believe, by the Romanists themselves, that the best commentaries on the Bible have been the works of Protestants. I know not, indeed, whether, since the celebrated paraphrase of Erasmus, any scholar has appeared amongst them, whose works are much valued, even in his own communion. Why have those who excel in every other kind of knowledge, to whom the world owes much of the increase of light which has shone upon these latter ages, failed, and failed only when they have attempted to explain the scriptures of God? Why, but because they are in the church less read and less examined, because they have another rule of deciding controversies, and instituting laws.

Of the Bible some of the books are prophetical, some doctrinal and historical, as the gospels, of which we have in the subsequent pages attempted an illustration. The books of the evangelists contain an account of the life of our blessed SAVIOUR, more particularly of the years of his ministry, interspersed with his precepts, doctrines, and predictions. Each of these histories contain facts and dictates related

likewise in the rest, that the truth might be established by concurrence of testimony; and each has likewise facts and dictates which the rest omit, to prove that they were wrote without communication.

These writers, not affecting the exactness of chronologers, and relating various events of the same life, or the same events with various circumstances, have some difficulties to him, who, without the help of many books, desires to collect a series of the acts and precepts of Jesus Christ; fully to know his life, whose example was given for our imitation; fully to understand his precepts, which it is sure destruction to disobey.

In this work, therefore, an attempt has been made, by the help of harmonists and expositors, to reduce the four gospels into one series of narration, to form a complete history out of the different narratives of the evangelists, by inserting every event in the order of time, and connecting every precept of life and doctrine, with the occasion on which it was delivered; showing, as far as history or the knowledge of ancient customs can inform us, the reason and propriety of every action; and explaining, or endeavouring to explain, every precept and declaration in its true meaning.

Let it not be hastily concluded, that we intend to substitute this book for the gospels, or obtrude our own expositions as the oracles of God. We recommend to the unlearned reader to consult us when he finds any difficulty, as men who have laboured not to deceive ourselves, and who are without any temptation to deceive him: but as men, however, that, while

they mean best, may be mistaken. Let him be careful, therefore, to distinguish what we cite from the gospels, from what we offer as our own: he will find many difficulties removed; and if some yet remain, let him remember that *God is in heaven and we upon earth*, that *our thoughts are not God's thoughts*, and that the great cure of doubt is an humble mind.

ANGELL'S STENOGRAPHY, or SHORT-HAND IMPROVED. 1758.

To the Most Noble CHARLES Duke of RICHMOND, LENNOX, AUBIGNY, &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

THE improvement of arts and sciences has always been esteemed laudable; and in proportion to their utility and advantage to mankind, they have generally gained the patronage of persons the most distinguished for birth, learning, and reputation in the world. This is an art undoubtedly of publick utility, and which has been cultivated by persons of distinguished abilities, as will appear from its history. But as most of their systems have been defective, clogged with a multiplicity of rules, and perplexed by arbitrary, intricate, and impracticable schemes, I have endeavoured to rectify their defects, to adapt it to all capacities, and render it of general, lasting, and extensive benefit. How this is effected the following plates will sufficiently explain, to which I have prefixed a suitable introduction, and a concise and im-

partial history of the origin and progressive improvements of this art. And as I have submitted the whole to the inspection of accurate judges, whose approbation I am honoured with, I most humbly crave leave to publish it to the world under your Grace's patronage; not merely on account of your great dignity and high rank in life, though these receive a lustre from your Grace's humanity; but also from a knowledge of your Grace's disposition to encourage every useful art, and favour all true promoters of science. That your Grace may long live the friend of learning, the guardian of liberty, and the patron of virtue, and then transmit your name with the highest honour and esteem to latest posterity, is the ardent wish of

Your Grace's most humble, &c.*

BARETTI'S DICTIONARY of the ENGLISH and ITALIAN LANGUAGES. 2 vols. 4to. 1760.

To his Excellency DON FELIX, Marquis of ABREU and BERTODANO, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary from his Catholic Majesty to the King of Great Britain.

MY LORD,

THAT acuteness of penetration into characters and designs, and that nice discernment of human passions and practices which have raised you to your present

* This is the Dedication mentioned by Dr. Johnson himself in Boswell's Life, vol. ii. 226. I should not else have suspected what has so little of his manner. C.

height of station and dignity of employment, have long shown you that dedicatory addresses are written for the sake of the author more frequently than of the patron: and though they profess only reverence and zeal, are commonly dictated by interest or vanity.

I shall therefore not endeavour to conceal my motives, but confess that the Italian Dictionary is dedicated to your Excellency, that I might gratify my vanity, by making it known, that in a country where I am a stranger, I have been able, without any external recommendation, to obtain the notice and countenance of a nobleman so eminent for knowledge and ability, that in his twenty-third year he was sent as Plenipotentiary to superintend, at Aix-la-Chapelle, the interests of a nation remarkable above all others for gravity and prudence: and who, at an age when very few are admitted to publick trust, transacts the most important affairs between two of the greatest monarchs of the world.

If I could attribute to my own merits the favours which your Excellency every day confers upon me, I know not how much my pride might be inflamed; but when I observe the extensive benevolence and boundless liberality by which all who have the honour to approach you, are dismissed more happy than they come, I am afraid of raising my own value, since I dare not ascribe it so much to my power of pleasing as your willingness to be pleased.

Yet as every man is inclined to flatter himself, I am desirous to hope that I am not admitted to greater intimacy than others without some qualifications for so advantageous a distinction, and shall

think it my duty to justify, by constant respect and sincerity, the favours which you have been pleased to show me.

I am, my Lord,
Your Excellency's most humble
and most obedient Servant,
J. BARETTI.

London, Jan. 12, 1760.

A Complete System of ASTRONOMICAL CHRONOLOGY, unfolding the Scriptures. By JOHN KENNEDY, Rector of Bradley, in Derbyshire. 4to. 1762.

TO THE KING.

SIRE,

HAVING by long labour, and diligent enquiry, endeavoured to illustrate and establish the chronology of the Bible, I hope to be pardoned the ambition of inscribing my work to your Majesty.

An age of war is not often an age of learning: the tumult and anxiety of military preparations seldom leave attention vacant to the silent progress of study, and the placid conquests of investigation; yet, surely, a vindication of the inspired writers can never be unseasonably offered to the DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, nor can it ever be improper to promote that Religion without which all other blessings are snares of destruction, without which armies cannot make us safe, nor victories make us happy.

I am far from imagining that my testimony can add any thing to the honours of your Majesty, to

the splendour of a reign crowned with triumphs, to the beauty of a life dignified by virtue. I can only wish, that your reign may long continue such as it has begun, and that the effulgence of your example may spread its light through distant ages, till it shall be the highest praise of any future monarch, that he exhibits some resemblance of GEORGE THE THIRD.

I am, Sire,
Your Majesty's, &c.
JOHN KENNEDY.

HOOLE's Translation of TASSO's JERUSALEM DELIVERED. 1763.

TO THE QUEEN.

MADAM,

To approach the high and the illustrious has been in all ages the privilege of poets; and though translations cannot justly claim the same honour, yet they naturally follow their authors as attendants: and I hope that in return for having enabled Tasso to diffuse his fame through the British dominions, I may be introduced by him to the presence of your Majesty.

Tasso has a peculiar claim to your Majesty's favour, as follower and panegyrist of the House of Este, which has one common ancestor with the House of Hanover; and in reviewing his life it is not easy to forbear a wish that he had lived in a happier time, when he might among the descendants of that illustrious family have found a more liberal and potent patronage.

I cannot but observe, Madam, how unequally reward is proportioned to merit, when I reflect that the happiness which was withheld from Tasso is reserved for me; and that the poem which once hardly procured to its author the countenance of the Princes of Ferrara, has attracted to its translator the favourable notice of a BRITISH QUEEN.

Had this been the fate of Tasso, he would have been able to have celebrated the condescension of your Majesty in nobler language, but could not have felt it with more ardent gratitude, than,

Madam,

Your Majesty's

most faithful and devoted Servant.

LONDON and WESTMINSTER IMPROVED. Illustrated by Plans. 4to. 1766.

TO THE KING.

SIRE,

THE patronage of works which have a tendency towards advancing the happiness of mankind, naturally belongs to great Princes; and publick good, in which publick elegance is comprised, has ever been the object of your Majesty's regard.

In the following pages your Majesty, I flatter myself, will find, that I have endeavoured at extensive and general usefulness. Knowing, therefore, your Majesty's early attention to the polite arts, and more particular affection for the study of architecture, I was encouraged to hope that the work which I now

presume to lay before your Majesty, might oe thought not unworthy your royal favour: and that the protection which your Majesty always affords to those who mean well, may be extended to,

Sire,

Your Majesty's most dutiful Subject,
and most obedient and most humble Servant,
JOHN GWYNN.

The ENGLISH WORKS of ROGER ASCHAM, edited by JAMES BENNET. 4to. 1767.

To the Right Hon. ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, Earl of SHAFTESBURY, Baron ASHLEY, Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of DORSETSHIRE, F. R. S.

MY LORD,

HAVING endeavoured, by an elegant and useful edition, to recover the esteem of the Publick to an Author undeservedly neglected, the only care which I now owe to his memory, is that of inscribing his works to a patron whose acknowledged eminence of character may awaken attention and attract regard.

I have not suffered the zeal of an editor so far to take possession of my mind, as that I should obtrude upon your Lordship any productions unsuitable to the dignity of your rank or of your sentiments. Ascham was not only the chief ornament of a celebrated college, but visited foreign countries, frequented courts, and lived in familiarity with statesmen and princes; not only instructed scholars in literature, but formed ELIZABETH to empire.

To propagate the works of such a writer will not be unworthy of your Lordship's patriotism: for I know not what greater benefits you can confer on your country, than that of preserving worthy names from oblivion, by joining them with your own.

I am, my Lord,
Your Lordship's most obliged,
most obedient, and most humble Servant,
JAMES BENNET.

ADAMS'S TREATISE on the GLOBES. 1767.

TO THE KING.

SIRE,

IT is the privilege of real greatness not to be afraid of diminution by condescending to the notice of little things: and I therefore can boldly solicit the patronage of your Majesty to the humble labours by which I have endeavoured to improve the instruments of science, and make the globes on which the earth and sky are delineated less defective in their construction, and less difficult in their use.

Geography is in a peculiar manner the science of Princes. When a private student revolves the terraqueous globe, he beholds a succession of countries in which he has no more interest than in the imaginary regions of Jupiter and Saturn. But your Majesty must contemplate the scientific picture with other sentiments, and consider, as oceans and continents are rolling before you, how large a part of mankind is now waiting on your determinations, and may receive

benefits or suffer evils, as your influence is extended or withdrawn.

The provinces which your Majesty's arms have added to your dominions, make no inconsiderable part of the orb allotted to human beings. Your power is acknowledged by nations whose names we know not yet how to write, and whose boundaries we cannot yet describe. But your Majesty's lenity and beneficence give us reason to expect the time when science shall be advanced by the diffusion of happiness: when the deserts of America shall become pervious and safe: when those who are now restrained by fear shall be attracted by reverence: and multitudes who now range the woods for prey, and live at the mercy of winds and seasons, shall by the paternal care of your Majesty enjoy the plenty of cultivated lands, the pleasures of society, the security of law, and the light of revelation.

I am, Sire,

Your Majesty's most humble, most obedient,
and most dutiful Subject and Servant,

GEORGE ADAMS.

Bishop ZACHARY PEARCE's Posthumous Works. 2 vols. 4°. Published by the Rev. Mr. DERBY, 1777.

TO THE KING.

SIRE,

I PRESUME to lay before your Majesty the last labours of a learned bishop, who died in the toils and duties of his calling. He is now beyond the reach of all earthly honours and rewards; and only the hope of inciting others to imitate him, makes it now fit to be remembered, that he enjoyed in his life the favour of your Majesty.

The tumultuary life of Princes seldom permits them to survey the wide extent of national interest without losing sight of private merit: to exhibit qualities which may be imitated by the highest and the humblest of mankind: and to be at once amiable and great.

Such characters, if now and then they appear in history, are contemplated with admiration. May it be the ambition of all your subjects to make haste with their tribute of reverence: and as posterity may learn from your Majesty how kings should live, may they learn, likewise, from your people how they should be honoured.

I am,
May it please your Majesty,
with the most profound respect,
Your Majesty's
most dutiful and devoted
Subject and Servant.

PREFACE

TO

NEW TABLES OF INTEREST:

Designed to answer, in the most correct and expeditious manner, the common purposes of business, particularly the business of the Publick Funds.

BY JOHN PAYNE,

OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND. 1758.

AMONG the writers of fiction, whose business is to furnish that entertainment which fancy perpetually demands, it is a standing plea, that the beauties of nature are now exhausted: that imitation has exerted all its power, and that nothing more can be done for the service of their mistress, than to exhibit a perpetual transposition of known objects, and draw new pictures, not by introducing new images, but by giving new lights and shades, a new arrangement and colouring to the old. This plea has been cheerfully admitted: and fancy, led by the hand of a skilful guide, treads over again the flowery path she has often trod before, as much enamoured with every new diversification of the same prospect, as with the first appearance of it.

In the regions of science, however, there is not the same indulgence: the understanding and the judgment travel there in the pursuit of truth, whom they always expect to find in one simple form, free from the disguises of dress and ornament: and, as they travel with laborious step and a fixed eye, they are content to stop when the shades of night darken the prospect, and patiently wait the radiance of a new morning, to lead them forward in the path they have chosen, which, however thorny, or however steep, is severely preferred to the most pleasing excursions that bring them no nearer to the object of their search. The plea, therefore, that nature is exhausted, and that nothing is left to gratify the mind, but different combinations of the same ideas, when urged as a reason for multiplying unnecessary labours among the sons of science, is not so readily admitted: the understanding, when in possession of truth, is satisfied with the simple acquisition; and not, like fancy, inclined to wander after new pleasures in the diversification of objects already known, which, perhaps, may lead to errour.

But notwithstanding this general disinclination to accumulate labours for the sake of that pleasure which arises merely from different modes of investigating truth, yet, as the mines of science have been diligently opened, and their treasures widely diffused, there may be parts chosen, which, by a proper combination and arrangement, may contribute not only to entertainment but use, like the rays of the sun, collected in a concave mirrour, to serve particular purposes of light and heat.

The power of arithmetical numbers has been tried to a vast extent, and variously applied to the improvement both of business and science. In particular, so many calculations have been made with respect to the value and use of money, that some serve only for speculation and amusement; and there is great opportunity for selecting a few that are peculiarly adapted to common business, and the daily interchanges of property among men. Those which happen in the Publick Funds are, at this time, the most frequent and numerous: and to answer the purposes of that business, in some degree, more perfectly than has hitherto been done, the following tables are published. What that degree of perfection above other tables of the same kind may be, is a matter, not of opinion and taste, in which many might vary, but of accuracy and usefulness, with respect to which most will agree. The approbation they meet with will, therefore, depend upon the experience of those for whom they were principally designed, the proprietors of the publick funds, and the brokers who transact the business of the funds, to whose patronage they are cheerfully committed.

Among the Brokers of Stocks are men of great honour and probity, who are candid and open in all their transactions, and incapable of mean and selfish purposes: and it is to be lamented, that a market of such importance as the present state of this nation has made theirs, should be brought into any discredit, by the intrusion of bad men, who, instead of

serving their country, and procuring an honest subsistence in the army, or the fleet, endeavour to maintain luxurious tables, and splendid equipages, by sporting with the publick credit.

It is not long since the evil of stock-jobbing was risen to such an enormous height, as to threaten great injury to every actual proprietor: particularly to many widows and orphans, who, being bound to depend upon the funds for their whole subsistence, could not possibly retreat from the approaching danger. But this evil, after many unsuccessful attempts of the legislature to conquer it, was, like many other, at length subdued by its own violence; and the reputable Stock-brokers seem now to have it in their power effectually to prevent its return, by not suffering the most distant approaches of it to take footing in their own practice, and by opposing every effort made for its recovery by the desperate sons of fortune, who, not having the courage of highwaymen, take 'Change-Alley rather than the road, because, though more injurious than highwaymen, they are less in danger of punishment by the loss either of liberty or life.

With respect to the other patrons to whose encouragement these Tables have been recommended, the proprietors of the publick funds, who are busy in the improvement of their fortunes, it is sufficient to say—that no motive can sanctify the accumulation of wealth, but an ardent desire to make the most honourable and virtuous use of it, by contributing to the support of good government, the

increase of arts and industry, the rewards of genius and virtue, and the relief of wretchedness and want.

> What Good, what True, what Fit we justly call,
> Let this be all our care—for this is All;
> To lay this TREASURE up, and hoard with haste
> What *ev'ry day* will want, and most the *last*.
> This done, the poorest can no wants endure;
> And this not done, the richest must be poor.
>
> POPE.

THOUGHTS

ON THE

CORONATION

OF HIS PRESENT MAJESTY

KING GEORGE THE THIRD;

OR,

Reasons offered against confining the Procession to the usual Track, and pointing out others more commodious and proper. To which are prefixed, a plan of the different Paths recommended, with the Parts adjacent, and a Sketch of the Procession. Most humbly submitted to consideration.*

ALL pomp is instituted for the sake of the publick. A show without spectators can no longer be a show. Magnificence in obscurity is equally vain with *a sun-dial in the grave.*

As the wisdom of our ancestors has appointed a very splendid and ceremonious inauguration of our kings, their intention was, that they should receive their crown with such awful rites, as might for ever impress upon them a due sense of the duties which they were to take, when the happiness of nations is put into their hands; and that the people, as many as can possibly be witnesses to any single act, should openly acknowledge their sovereign by universal homage.

By the late method of conducting the coronation, all these purposes have been defeated. Our kings,

* First printed in the Year 1761.

with their train, have crept to the temple through obscure passages; and the crown has been worn out of sight of the people. Of the multitudes, whom loyalty or curiosity brought together, the greater part has returned without a single glimpse of their prince's grandeur, and the day that opened with festivity ended in discontent.

This evil has proceeded from the narrowness and shortness of the way through which the procession has lately passed. As it is narrow, it admits of very few spectators; as it is short, it is soon passed. The first part of the train reaches the abbey before the whole has left the palace; and the nobility of England, in their robes of state, display their riches only to themselves.

All this inconvenience may be easily avoided by choosing a wider and longer course, which may be again enlarged and varied by going one way, and returning another. This is not without a precedent; for, not to enquire into the practice of remoter princes, the procession of Charles the Second's Coronation issued from the Tower, and passed through the whole length of the city to Whitehall*.

* The king went early in the morning to the Tower of London in his coach, most of the lords being there before. And about ten of the clock they set forward towards Whitehall, ranged in that order as the heralds had appointed; those of the long robe, the king's council at law, the masters of the chancery, and judges, going first, and so the lords in their order, very splendidly habited, on rich footcloths; the number of their footmen being limited, to the dukes ten, to the lords eight, and to the viscounts six, and the barons four, all richly clad, as their other servants were. The whole show was the most glorious in

The path in the late coronations has been only from Westminster Hall, along New Palace-yard, into Union-street, through the extreme end of King-street, and to the Abbey door, by the way of St. Margaret's church-yard.

The paths which I propose the procession to pass through, are,

I. From St. James's palace, along Pall-Mall and Charing-Cross, by Whitehall, through Parliament-street, down Bridge-street, into King-street, round St. Margaret's church-yard, and from thence into the Abbey.

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the order and expence, that had been ever seen in England; they who rode first being in Fleet-street when the king issued out of the Tower, as was known by the discharge of the ordnance: and it was near three of the clock in the afternoon, when the king alighted at Whitehall. The next morning the king rode in the same state in his robes, and with his crown on his head, and all the lords in their robes, to Westminster Hall; where all the ensigns for the coronation were delivered to those who were appointed to carry them, the earl of Northumberland being made high constable, and the earl of Suffolk earl marshal, for the day. And then all the lords in their order, and the king himself, walked on foot, upon blue cloth, from Westminster Hall to the Abbey Church, where, after a sermon preached by Dr. Morley, (then bishop of Worcester), in Henry the Seventh's Chapel, the king was sworn, crowned and anointed, by Dr. Juxon, archbishop of Canterbury, with all the solemnity that in those cases had been used. All which being done, the king returned in the same manner on foot to Westminster Hall, which was adorned with rich hangings and statues; and there the king dined, and the lords on either side at tables provided for them: and all other ceremonies were performed with great order and magnificence.—Life of Lord Clarendon, p. 187.

II. From St. James's palace across the canal, into the Bird-cage-walk, from thence into Great George-street, then turning down Long-ditch, (the Gate-house previously to be taken down) proceed to the Abbey. Or,

III. Continuing the course along George-street, into King-street, and by the way of St. Margaret's church-yard, to pass into the west door of the Abbey.

IV. From St. James's palace, the usual way his Majesty passes to the House of Lords, as far as to the parade, when, leaving the horse-guards on the left, proceed along the park, up to Great George-street, and pass to the Abbey in either of the tracks last mentioned.

V. From Westminster Hall into Parliament-street, down Bridge-street, along Great George-street, through Long-ditch (the Gate-house, as before observed, to be taken down), and so on to the west door of the Abbey.

VI. From Whitehall up Parliament-street, down Bridge-street, into King-street, round St. Margaret's church-yard, proceed into the Abbey.

VII. From the House of Lords along St. Margaret's-street, across New Palace-yard, into Parliament-street, and from thence to the Abbey by the way last mentioned.

But if, on no account, the path must be extended to any of the lengths here recommended, I could wish, rather than see the procession confined to the old way, that it should pass.

VIII. From Westminster Hall along Palace-

yard, into Parliament-street, and continued in the last mentioned path, viz. through Bridge-street, King-street, and round the church-yard, to the west door of the cathedral.

IX. The return from the Abbey, in either case, to be as usual, viz. round St. Margaret's church-yard, into King-street, through Union-street, along New Palace-yard, and so into Westminster Hall.

It is almost indifferent which of the six first ways now proposed be taken; but there is a stronger reason than mere convenience for changing the common course. Some of the streets in the old track are so ruinous, that there is danger lest the houses, loaded as they will be with people, all pressing forward in the same direction, should fall down upon the procession. The least evil that can be expected is, that in so close a crowd, some will be trampled upon, and others smothered; and surely a pomp that costs a single life is too dearly bought. The new streets, as they are more extensive, will afford place to greater numbers, with less danger.

In this proposal I do not foresee any objection that can reasonably be made. That a longer march will require more time, is not to be mentioned, as implying any defect in a scheme of which the whole purpose is to lengthen the march and protract the time. The longest course which I have proposed is not equal to an hour's walk in the Park. The labour is not such, as that the king should refuse it to his people, or the nobility grudge it to the king. Queen Anne went from the palace through the Park to the Hall, on the day of her coronation; and when old

and infirm, used to pass on solemn thanksgivings from the palace to St. Paul's church*.

* In order to convey to the reader some idea how highly parade and magnificence were estimated by our ancestors, on these solemn occasions, I shall take notice of the manner of conducting lady Anne Boleyn from Greenwich, previous to her coronation, as it is recited by Stow.

King Henry VIII. (says that historian) having divorced queen Catherine, and married Anne Boleyn, or Boloine, who was descended from Godfrey Boloine, Mayor of the city of London, and intending her coronation, sent to order the Lord Mayor, not only to make all the preparations necessary for conducting his royal consort from Greenwich, by water, to the Tower of London, but to adorn the city after the most magnificent manner, for her passage through it to Westminster.

In obedience to the royal precept, the mayor and common-council not only ordered the company of Haberdashers, of which the lord mayor was a member, to prepare a magnificent state barge; but enjoined all the city corporations to provide themselves with barges, and to adorn them in the most superb manner, and especially to have them supplied with good bands of music.

On the 29th of May, the time prefixed for this pompous procession by water, the mayor, aldermen, and commons, assembled at St. Mary-hill; the mayor and aldermen in scarlet, with gold chains, and those who were knights, with the collars of SS. At one they went on board the city barge at Billingsgate, which was most magnificently decorated, and attended by fifty noble barges, belonging to the several companies of the city, with each its own corporation on board; and, for the better regulation of this procession, it was ordered, that each barge should keep twice their lengths asunder.

Thus regulated, the city barge was preceded by another mounted with ordnance, and the figures of dragons, and other monsters, incessantly emitting fire and smoke, with much noise. Then the city barge, attended on the right by the Haberdashers' state barge, called the Bachelors, which was covered with gold

Part of my scheme supposes the demolition of the Gate-house, a building so offensive, that, without any occasional reason, it ought to be pulled down, for it disgraces the present magnificence of the capital,

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brocade, and adorned with sails of silk, with two rich standards of the king's and queen's arms at her head and stern, besides a variety of flags and streamers, containing the arms of that company, and those of the merchant adventurers; besides which, the shrouds and ratlines were hung with a number of small bells: on the left was a barge that contained a very beautiful mount, on which stood a white falcon crowned, perched upon a golden stump enriched with roses, being the queen's emblem; and round the mount sat several beautiful virgins, singing, and playing upon instruments. The other barges followed in regular order, till they came below Greenwich. On their return the procession began with that barge which was before the last, in which were mayor's and sheriff's officers, and this was followed by those of the inferior companies, ascending to the lord mayor's, which immediately preceded that of the queen, who was attended by the Bachelors' or state barge, with the magnificence of which her majesty was much delighted; and being arrived at the Tower, she returned the lord mayor and aldermen thanks, for the pomp with which she had been conducted thither.

Two days after, the lord mayor, in a gown of crimson velvet, and a rich collar of SS, attended by the sheriffs, and two domestics in red and white damask, went to receive the queen at the Tower of London, whence the sheriffs returned to see that every thing was in order. The streets were just before new gravelled from the Tower to Temple-bar, and railed in on each side, to the intent that the horses should not slide on the pavement, nor the people be hurt by the horses; within the rails near Grace-church, stood a body of Anseatic merchants, and next to them the several corporations of the city, in their formalities, reaching to the aldermen's station at the upper end of Cheapside. On the opposite side were placed the city constables dressed in silk and velvet, with staffs in their hands, to prevent the breaking in of

and is a continual nuisance to neighbours and passengers.

A longer course of scaffolding is doubtless more expensive than a shorter; but it is hoped that the

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the mob, or any other disturbance. On this occasion, Grace-church-street and Cornhill were hung with crimson and scarlet cloth, and the sides of the houses of a place then called Goldsmiths-row, in Cheapside, were adorned with gold brocades, velvet, and rich tapestry.

The procession began from the Tower with twelve of the French ambassador's domestics in blue velvet, the trappings of their horses being blue sarsnet, interspersed with white crosses; after whom marched those of the equestrian order, two and two, followed by judges in their robes, two and two; then came the knights of the Bath in violet gowns, purfled with menever. Next came the abbots, barons, bishops, earls, and marquises, in their robes, two and two. Then the lord chancellor, followed by the Venetian ambassador and the archbishop of York: next the French ambassador and the archbishop of Canterbury, followed by two gentlemen representing the dukes of Normandy and Aquitain; after whom rode the lord mayor of London with his mace, and Garter in his coat of arms; then the duke of Suffolk, lord high steward, followed by the deputy marshal of England, and all the other officers of state in their robes, carrying the symbols of their several offices: then others of the nobility in crimson velvet, and all the queen's officers in scarlet, followed by her chancellor uncovered, who immediately preceded his mistress.

The queen was dressed in silver brocade, with a mantle of the same furred with ermine; her hair was dishevelled, and she wore a chaplet upon her head set with jewels of inestimable value. She sat in a litter covered with silver tissue, and carried by two beautiful pads cloathed in white damask, and led by her footmen. Over the litter was carried a canopy of cloth of gold, with a silver bell at each corner, supported by sixteen knights alternately, by four at a time.

time is now past, when any design was received or rejected according to the money that it would cost. Magnificence cannot be cheap, for what is cheap cannot be magnificent. The money that is so spent,

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After her majesty came her chamberlain, followed by her master of horse, leading a beautiful pad, with a side-saddle and trappings of silver tissue. Next came seven ladies in crimson velvet, faced with gold brocade, mounted on beautiful horses with gold trappings. Then followed two chariots covered with cloth of gold, in the first of which were the duchess of Norfolk and the marchioness of Dorset, and in the second four ladies in crimson velvet; then followed seven ladies dressed in the same manner, on horseback, with magnificent trappings, followed by another chariot all in white, with six ladies in crimson velvet; this was followed by another all in red, with eight ladies in the same dress with the former: next came thirty gentlewomen, attendants to the ladies of honour; they were on horseback, dressed in silks and velvet; and the cavalcade was closed by the horse-guards.

This pompous procession being arrived in Fenchurch-street, the queen stopped at a beautiful pageant, crowded with children in mercantile habits; who congratulated her majesty upon the joyful occasion of her happy arrival in the city.

Thence she proceeded to Gracechurch corner, where was erected a very magnificent pageant, at the expence of the company of Anseatic merchants, in which was represented mount Parnassus, with the fountain of Helicon, of white marble, out of which arose four springs about four feet high, centering at the top in a small globe, from whence issued plenty of Rhenish wine till night. On the mount sat Apollo, at his feet was Calliope, and beneath were the rest of the Muses, surrounding the mount, and playing upon a variety of musical instruments, at whose feet were inscribed several epigrams suited to the occasion, in letters of gold.

Her majesty then proceeded to Leadenhall, where stood a pageant, representing a hill encompassed with red and white

is spent at home, and the king will receive again what he lays out on the pleasure of his people. Nor is it to be omitted, that if the cost be considered as expended by the publick, much more will be saved than

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roses; and above it was a golden stump, upon which a white falcon, descending from above, perched, and was quickly followed by an angel, who put a crown of gold upon his head. A little lower on the hillock sat St. Anne, surrounded by her progeny, one of whom made an oration, in which was a wish that her majesty might prove extremely prolific.

The procession then advanced to the conduit in Cornhill; where the graces sat enthroned, with a fountain before them, incessantly discharging wine; and underneath, a poet, who described the qualities peculiar to each of these amiable deities, and presented the queen with their several gifts.

The cavalcade thence proceeded to a great conduit that stood opposite to Mercers-hall in Cheapside, and, upon that occasion, was painted with a variety of emblems, and during the solemnity and remaining part of the day, ran with different sorts of wine, for the entertainment of the populace.

At the end of Wood-street, the standard there was finely embellished with royal portraitures and a number of flags, on which were painted coats of arms and trophies, and above was a concert of vocal and instrumental music.

At the upper end of Cheapside was the aldermen's station, where the recorder addressed the queen in a very elegant oration, and, in the name of the citizens, presented her with a thousand marks in a purse of gold tissue, which her majesty very gracefully received.

At a small distance, by Cheapside conduit, was a pageant, in which were seated Minerva, Juno, and Venus; before whom stood the god Mercury; who, in their names, presented the queen a golden apple.

At St. Paul's gate was a fine pageant, in which sat three ladies richly dressed, with each a chaplet on her head, and a tablet in her hand, containing Latin inscriptions.

lost; for the excessive prices at which windows and tops of houses are now let, will be abated, not only greater numbers will be admitted to the show, but each will come at a cheaper rate.

Some regulations are necessary, whatever track be chosen. The scaffold ought to be raised at least four feet, with rails high enough to support the standers, and yet so low as not to hinder the view.

It would add much to the gratification of the people, if the horse-guards, by which all our processions have been of late encumbered, and rendered danger-

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At the east end of St. Paul's cathedral, the queen was entertained by some of the scholars belonging to St. Paul's school, with verses in praise of the king and her majesty, with which she seemed highly delighted.

Thence proceeding to Ludgate, which was finely decorated, her majesty was entertained with several songs adapted to the occasion, sung in concert by men and boys upon the leads over the gate.

At the end of Shoe-lane, in Fleet-street, a handsome tower with four turrets was erected upon the conduit, in each of which stood one of the cardinal virtues, with their several symbols; who, addressing themselves to the queen, promised they would never leave her, but be always her constant attendants. Within the tower was an excellent concert of music, and the conduit all the while ran with various sorts of wine.

At Temple-bar she was again entertained with songs, sung in concert by a choir of men and boys; and having from thence proceeded to Westminster, she returned the lord mayor thanks for his good offices, and those of the citizens, that day. The day after, the lord mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs, assisted at the coronation, which was performed with great splendour.

Stow's Annals.

Note, The same historian informs us, that queen Elizabeth passed in the like manner, through the city, to her coronation.

ous to the multitude, were to be left behind at the coronation; and if, contrary to the desires of the people, the procession must pass in the old track, that the number of foot soldiers be diminished; since it cannot but offend every Englishman to see troops of soldiers placed between him and his sovereign, as if they were the most honourable of the people, or the king required guards to secure his person from his subjects. As their station makes them think themselves important, their insolence is always such as may be expected from servile authority; and the impatience of the people, under such immediate oppression, always produces quarrels, tumults, and mischief.

PREFACE

TO THE

ARTISTS' CATALOGUE, FOR 1762.

THE publick may justly require to be informed of the nature and extent of every design, for which the favour of the publick is openly solicited. The artists, who were themselves the first projectors of an exhibition in this nation, and who have now contributed to the following catalogue, think it therefore necessary to explain their purpose, and justify their conduct. An exhibition of the works of art, being a spectacle new in this kingdom, has raised various opinions and conjectures among those who are unacquainted with the practice in foreign nations. Those who set out their performances to general view, have been too often considered as the rivals of each other, as men actuated, if not by avarice, at least by vanity, and contending for superiority of fame, though not for a pecuniary prize: It cannot be denied or doubted, that all who offer themselves to criticism are desirous of praise; this desire is not only innocent, but virtuous, while it is undebased by artifice, and unpolluted by envy; and of envy or artifice these men can never be accused, who, already enjoying

all the honours and profits of their profession, are content to stand candidates for publick notice, with genius yet unexperienced, and diligence yet unrewarded; who, without any hope of increasing their own reputation or interest, expose their names and their works only that they may furnish an opportunity of appearance to the young, the diffident, and the neglected. The purpose of this exhibition is not to enrich the artists, but to advance the art; the eminent are not flattered with preference, nor the obscure insulted with contempt; whoever hopes to deserve publick favour, is here invited to display his merit.

Of the price put upon this exhibition some account may be demanded. Whoever sets his work to be shewn, naturally desires a multitude of spectators; but his desire defeats its own end, when spectators assemble in such numbers as to obstruct one another. Though we are far from wishing to diminish the pleasures, or depreciate the sentiments of any class of the community, we know, however, what every one knows, that all cannot be judges or purchasers of works of art; yet we have already found by experience, that all are desirous to see an exhibition. When the terms of admission were low, our room was thronged with such multitudes as made access dangerous, and frightened away those whose approbation was most desired.

Yet, because it is seldom believed that money is got but for the love of money, we shall tell the use which we intend to make of our expected profits.

Many artists of great abilities are unable to sell

their works for their due price; to remove this inconvenience, an annual sale will be appointed, to which every man may send his works, and send them if he will without his name. These works will be reviewed by the committee that conduct the exhibition. A price will be secretly set on every piece, and registered by the secretary. If the piece exposed is sold for more, the whole price shall be the artist's; but if the purchaser's value is at less than the committee, the artist shall be paid the deficiency from the profits of the exhibition.

OPINIONS

ON

QUESTIONS OF LAW.*

ON SCHOOL CHASTISEMENT.

[A SCHOOLMASTER in Scotland was, in 1772, by a court of inferior jurisdiction, deprived of his office, for being somewhat severe in the chastisement of his scholars. The Court of Session considering it to be dangerous to the interest of learning and education to lessen the dignity of teachers, and make them afraid of too indulgent parents, instigated by the complaints of their children, restored him. His opponent appealed to the House of Lords, where Mr. Boswell was his counsel. On this occasion, Dr. Johnson dictated the following paper to Mr. Boswell, as some assistance to Mr. B. in his address to the Lords.]

"The charge is, that (this schoolmaster) has used immoderate and cruel correction. Correction, in itself, is not cruel: children, being not reasonable, can be governed only by fear. To impress this fear, is there-

* From Boswell's Life of Johnson.

fore one of the first duties of those who have the care of children. It is the duty of a parent; and has never been thought inconsistent with parental tenderness. It is the duty of a master, who is in his highest exaltation when he is *loco parentis*. Yet, as good things become evil by excess, correction, by being immoderate, may become cruel. But when is correction immoderate? When it is more frequent or more severe than is required *ad monendum et docendum*, for reformation and instruction. No severity is cruel which obstinacy makes necessary; for the greatest cruelty would be, to desist, and leave the scholar too careless for instruction, and too much hardened for reproof. Locke, in his Treatise of Education, mentions a mother, with applause, who whipped an infant eight times before she had subdued it: for had she stopped at the seventh act of correction, her daughter, says he, would have been ruined. The degrees of obstinacy in young minds, are very different; as different must be the degrees of persevering severity. A stubborn scholar must be corrected till he is subdued. The discipline of a school is military. There must be either unbounded licence, or absolute authority. The master, who punishes, not only consults the future happiness of him who is the immediate subject of correction, but he propagates obedience through the whole school; and establishes regularity by exemplary justice. The victorious obstinacy of a single boy would make his future endeavours of reformation or instruction totally ineffectual. Obstinacy, therefore, must never be victorious. Yet, it is well known that there

sometimes occurs a sullen and hardy resolution, that laughs at all common punishment, and bids defiance to all common degrees of pain. Correction must be proportionate to occasions. The flexible will be reformed by gentle discipline, and the refractory must be subdued by harsher methods. The degrees of scholastick, as of military punishment, no stated rules can ascertain. It must be enforced till it overpowers temptation; till stubbornness become flexible, and perverseness regular. Custom and reason have, indeed, set some bounds to scholastick penalties. The schoolmaster inflicts no capital punishments; nor enforces his edicts by either death or mutilation. The civil law has wisely determined, that a master who strikes at a scholar's eye shall be considered as criminal. But punishments, however severe, that produce no lasting evil, may be just and reasonable, because they may be necessary. Such have been the punishments used by the respondent. No scholar has gone from him either blind or lame, or with any of his limbs or powers injured or impaired. They were irregular, and he punished them: they were obstinate, and he enforced his punishment. But however provoked, he never exceeded the limits of moderation, for he inflicted nothing beyond present pain: and how much of that was required, no man is so little able to determine as those who have determined against him—the parents of the offenders. It has been said, that he used unprecedented and improper instruments of correction. Of this accusation the meaning is not very easy to be found. No instrument of

correction is more proper than another, but as it is better adapted to produce present pain without lasting mischief. Whatever were his instruments, no lasting mischief has ensued; and therefore, however unusual, in hands so cautious they were proper. It has been objected, that the respondent admits the charge of cruelty, by producing no evidence to confute it. Let it be considered, that his scholars are either dispersed at large in the world, or continue to inhabit the place in which they were bred. Those who are dispersed cannot be found: those who remain are the sons of his prosecutors, and are not likely to support a man to whom their fathers are enemies. If it be supposed that the enmity of their fathers proves the justness of the charge, it must be considered how often experience shows us, that men who are angry on one ground will accuse on another; with how little kindness, in a town of low trade, a man who lives by learning is regarded; and how implicitly, where the inhabitants are not very rich, a rich man is hearkened to and followed. In a place like Campbelltown, it is easy for one of the principal inhabitants to make a party. It is easy for that party to heat themselves with imaginary grievances. It is easy for them to oppress a man poorer than themselves; and natural to assert the dignity of riches, by persisting in oppression. The argument which attempts to prove the impropriety of restoring him to the school, by alleging that he has lost the confidence of the people, is not the subject of juridical consideration; for he is to suffer, if he must suffer, not for their judgment, but for his own actions. It

may be convenient for them to have another master; but it is a convenience of their own making. It would be likewise convenient for him to find another school; but this convenience he cannot obtain. The question is not what is now convenient, but what is generally right. If the people of Campbelltown be distressed by the restoration of the respondent, they are distressed only by their own fault; by turbulent passions and unreasonable desires; by tyranny, which law has defeated, and by malice, which virtue has surmounted."

[The decree of the Court of Session was reversed in the House of Lords, April 14, 1772, and the schoolmaster consequently deprived of his situation.]

ON VICIOUS INTROMISSION.

[It was held of old, and continued for a long period to be an established principle in Scotch law, that whoever intermeddled with the effects of a person deceased, without the interposition of legal authority to guard against embezzlement, should be subjected to pay all the debts of the deceased, as having been guilty of what was technically called VICIOUS INTROMISSION. The Court of Session had gradually relaxed the strictness of this principle, where the interference proved had been inconsiderable. In a case which came before that Court, in 1772, Mr. Boswell had laboured to persuade the judges to return to the ancient law. It was his opinion that they ought to adhere to it, but he exhausted all his powers of rea-

soning in vain. Dr. Johnson thought as he did, and, in order to assist him in his application to the Court for a revision and alteration of the judgment, dictated to Mr. Boswell the following argument.]

"This, we are told, is a law which has its force only from the long practice of the Court; and may, therefore, be suspended or modified as the Court shall think proper.

"Concerning the power of the Court to make or to suspend a law, we have no intention to enquire. It is sufficient for our purpose that every just law is dictated by reason; and that the practice of every legal court is regulated by equity. It is the quality of reason to be invariable and constant; and of equity, to give to one man what, in the same case, is given to another. The advantage which humanity derives from law is this: that the law gives every man a rule of action, and prescribes a mode of conduct which shall entitle him to the support and protection of society. That the law may be a rule of action, it is necessary that it be known: it is necessary that it be permanent and stable. The law is the measure of civil right: but if the measure be changeable, the extent of the thing measured never can be settled.

"To permit a law to be modified at discretion, is to leave the community without law. It is to withdraw the direction of that publick wisdom, by which the deficiencies of private understanding are to be supplied. It is to suffer the rash and ignorant to act at discretion, and then to depend for the legality of that action on the sentence of the judge. He that is thus governed, lives not by law, but by opinion: not

by a certain rule to which he can apply his intention before he acts, but by an uncertain and variable opinion, which he can never know but after he has committed the act on which that opinion shall be passed. He lives by a law (if a law it be) which he can never know before he has offended it. To this case may be justly applied that important principle, *misera est servitus ubi jus est aut incognitum aut vagum.* If intromission be not criminal till it exceeds a certain point, and that point be unsettled, and consequently different in different minds, the right of intromission, and the right of the creditor arising from it, are all *jura vaga*, and, by consequence, are *jura incognita;* and the result can be no other than a *misera servitus*, an uncertainty concerning the event of action, a servile dependance on private opinion.

"It may be urged, and with great plausibility, that there may be intromission without fraud; which, however true, will by no means justify an occasional and arbitrary relaxation of the law. The end of law is protection as well as vengeance. Indeed, vengeance is never used but to strengthen protection. That society only is well governed, where life is freed from danger, and from suspicion; where possession is so sheltered by salutary prohibitions, that violation is prevented more frequently than punished. Such a prohibition was this, while it operated with its original force. The creditor of the deceased was not only without loss, but without fear. He was not to seek a remedy for an injury suffered; for, injury was warded off.

"As the law has been sometimes administered, it

lays us open to wounds, because it is imagined to have the power of healing. To punish fraud when it is detected is the proper art of vindictive justice: but to prevent frauds, and make punishment unnecessary, is the great employment of legislative wisdom. To permit intromission, and to punish fraud, is to make law no better than a pitfall. To tread upon the brink is safe; but to come a step further is destruction. But, surely, it is better to enclose the gulph, and hinder all access, than by encouraging us to advance a little, to entice us afterwards a little further, and let us perceive our folly only by our destruction.

"As law supplies the weak with adventitious strength, it likewise enlightens the ignorant with extrinsick understanding. Law teaches us to know when we commit injury and when we suffer it. It fixes certain marks upon actions, by which we are admonished to do or to forbear them. *Qui sibi bene temperat in licitis*, says one of the fathers, *nunquam cadet in illicita.* He who never intromits at all, will never intromit with fraudulent intentions.

"The relaxation of the law against vicious intromission has been very favourably represented by a great master of jurisprudence *, whose words have been exhibited with unnecessary pomp, and seem to be considered as irresistibly decisive. The great moment of his authority makes it necessary to examine his position. 'Some ages ago (says he) before the ferocity of the inhabitants of this part of the island was subdued, the utmost severity of the civil law was

* Lord Kames, in his "Historical Law Tracts."

necessary, to restrain individuals from plundering each other. Thus, the man who intermeddled irregularly with the moveables of a person deceased, was subjected to all the debts of the deceased without limitation. This makes a branch of the law of Scotland, known by the name of *vicious intromission:* and so rigidly was this regulation applied in our Courts of Law, that the most trifling moveable abstracted *malâ fide*, subjected the intermeddler to the foregoing consequences, which proved in many instances a most rigorous punishment. But this severity was necessary, in order to subdue the undisciplined nature of our people. It is extremely remarkable, that in proportion to our improvement in manners, this regulation has been gradually softened and applied by our Sovereign Court with a sparing hand.'

" I find myself under the necessity of observing, that this learned and judicious writer has not accurately distinguished the deficiencies and demands of the different conditions of human life, which, from a degree of savageness and independence, in which all laws are vain, passes or may pass, by innumerable gradations, to a state of reciprocal benignity, in which laws shall be no longer necessary. Men are first wild and unsocial, living each man to himself, taking from the weak, and losing to the strong. In their first coalitions of society, much of this original savageness is retained. Of general happiness, the product of general confidence, there is yet no thought. Men continue to prosecute their own advantages by the nearest way; and the utmost severity of the civil law

is necessary to restrain individuals from plundering each other. The restraints then necessary, are restraints from plunder, from acts of publick violence, and undisguised oppression. The ferocity of our ancestors, as of all other nations, produced not fraud, but rapine. They had not yet learned to cheat, and attempted only to rob. As manners grow more polished, with the knowledge of good, men attain likewise dexterity in evil. Open rapine becomes less frequent, and violence gives way to cunning. Those who before invaded pastures and stormed houses, now begin to enrich themselves by unequal contracts and fraudulent intromissions. It is not against the violence of ferocity, but the circumventions of deceit, that this law was framed; and I am afraid the increase of commerce, and the incessant struggle for riches which commerce excites, give us no prospect of an end speedily to be expected of artifice and fraud. It therefore seems to be no very conclusive reasoning, which connects those two propositions:—'the nation is become less ferocious, and therefore the laws against fraud and *covin* shall be relaxed.'

"Whatever reason may have influenced the Judges to a relaxation of the law, it was not that the nation was grown less fierce; and, I am afraid, it cannot be affirmed, that it is grown less fraudulent.

"Since this law has been represented as rigorously and unreasonably penal, it seems not improper to consider what are the conditions and qualities that make the justice or propriety of a penal law.

"To make a penal law reasonable and just, two conditions are necessary, and two proper. It is ne-

cessary that the law should be adequate to its end; that, if it be observed, it shall prevent the evil against which it is directed. It is, secondly, necessary that the end of the law be of such importance as to deserve the security of a penal sanction. The other conditions of a penal law, which, though not absolutely necessary, are to a very high degree fit, are, that to the moral violation of the law there are many temptations, and that of the physical observance there is great facility.

"All these conditions apparently concur to justify the law which we are now considering. Its end is the security of property, and property very often of great value. The method by which it effects the security is efficacious, because it admits in its original rigour, no gradations of injury; but keeps guilt and innocence apart, by a distinct and definite limitation. He that intromits, is criminal; he that intromits not, is innocent. Of the two secondary considerations it cannot be denied that both are in our favour. The temptation to intromit is frequent and strong: so strong and so frequent, as to require the utmost activity of justice, and vigilance of caution, to withstand its prevalence; and the method by which a man may entitle himself to legal intromission, is so open and so facile, that to neglect it is a proof of fraudulent intention: for why should a man omit to do (but for reasons which he will not confess) that which he can do so easily, and that which he knows to be required by the law? If temptation were rare, a penal law might be deemed unnecessary. If the duty enjoined by the law were of difficult perform-

ance, omission, though it could not be justified, might be pitied. But in the present case, neither equity nor compassion operate against it. A useful, a necessary law is broken, not only without a reasonable motive, but with all the inducements to obedience that can be derived from safety and facility.

" I therefore return to my original position, that a law, to have its effects, must be permanent and stable. It may be said in the language of the schools, *Lex non recipit majus et minus*,—we may have a law, or we may have no law, but we cannot have half a law. We must either have a rule of action, or be permitted to act by discretion and by chance. Deviations from the law must be uniformly punished, or no man can be certain when he shall be safe.

" That from the rigour of the original institution this Court has sometimes departed, cannot be denied. But as it is evident that such deviations, as they make law uncertain, make life unsafe, I hope, that of departing from it there will now be an end: that the wisdom of our ancestors will be treated with due reverence: and that consistent and steady decisions will furnish the people with a rule of action, and leave fraud and fraudulent intromissions no future hope of impunity or escape."

ON LAY-PATRONAGE

IN THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

[Question—Whether the claim of lay-patrons to present ministers to parishes be well founded: and supposing it to be well founded, whether it ought to be exercised without the concurrence of the people? —Written in 1773.]

"Against the right of patrons is commonly opposed, by the inferior judicatures, the plea of conscience. Their conscience tells them, that the people ought to choose their pastor; their conscience tells them, that they ought not to impose upon a congregation a minister ungrateful and unacceptable to his auditors. Conscience is nothing more than a conviction felt by ourselves of something to be done, or something to be avoided: and in questions of simple unperplexed morality, conscience is very often a guide that may be trusted. But before conscience can determine, the state of the question is supposed to be completely known. In questions of law, or of fact, conscience is very often confounded with opinion. No man's conscience can tell him the rights of another man; they must be known by rational investigation or historical enquiry. Opinion, which he that holds it may call his conscience, may teach some men that religion would be promoted, and quiet preserved, by granting to the people universally the choice of their ministers. But it is a conscience very ill informed that violates the rights of one man, for the convenience of another. Religion cannot be promoted by in-

justice: and it was never yet found that a popular election was very quietly transacted.

"That justice would be violated by transferring to the people the right of patronage, is apparent to all who know whence that right had its original. The right of patronage was not at first a privilege torn by power from unresisting poverty. It is not an authority at first usurped in times of ignorance, and established only by succession and by precedents. It is not a grant capriciously made from a higher tyrant to a lower. It is a right dearly purchased by the first possessors, and justly inherited by those that succeed them. When Christianity was established in this island, a regular mode of worship was prescribed. Publick worship requires a publick place; and the proprietors of lands, as they were converted, built churches for their families and their vassals. For the maintenance of ministers they settled a certain portion of their lands; and a district, through which each minister was required to extend his care, was, by that circumscription, constituted a parish. This is a position so generally received in England, that the extent of a manor and of a parish are regularly received for each other. The churches which the proprietors of lands had thus built and thus endowed, they justly thought themselves entitled to provide with ministers; and where the episcopal government prevails, the Bishop has no power to reject a man nominated by the patron, but for some crime that might exclude him from the priesthood. For the endowment of the church being the gift of the landlord, he was consequently at liberty to give it according to his choice, to any man capable of performing the holy offices.

The people did not choose him, because the people did not pay him.

"We hear it sometimes urged, that this original right is passed out of memory, and is obliterated and obscured by many translations of property and changes of government; that scarce any church is now in the hands of the heirs of the builders; and that the present persons have entered subsequently upon the pretended rights by a thousand accidental and unknown causes. Much of this, perhaps, is true. But how is the right of patronage extinguished? If the right followed the lands, it is possessed by the same equity by which the lands are possessed. It is, in effect, part of the manor, and protected by the same laws with every other privilege. Let us suppose an estate forfeited by treason, and granted by the Crown to a new family. With the lands were forfeited all the rights appendant to those lands; by the same power that grants the lands, the rights also are granted. The right lost to the patron falls not to the people, but is either retained by the Crown, or, what to the people is the same thing, is by the Crown given away. Let it change hands ever so often, it is possessed by him that receives it with the same right as it was conveyed. It may, indeed, like all our possessions, be forcibly seized or fraudulently obtained. But no injury is still done to the people; for what they never had, they have never lost. Caius may usurp the right of Titius, but neither Caius nor Titius injure the people; and no man's conscience, however tender or however active, can prompt him to restore what may be proved to have been never taken away. Sup-

posing, what I think cannot be proved, that a popular election of ministers were to be desired, our desires are not the measure of equity. It were to be desired that power should be only in the hands of the merciful, and riches in the possession of the generous; but the law must leave both riches and power where it finds them; and must often leave riches with the covetous, and power with the cruel. Convenience may be a rule in little things, where no other rule has been established. But as the great end of government is to give every man his own, no inconvenience is greater than that of making right uncertain. Nor is any man more an enemy to publick peace, than he who fills weak heads with imaginary claims, and breaks the series of civil subordination, by inciting the lower classes of mankind to encroach upon the higher.

"Having thus shown that the right of patronage, being originally purchased, may be legally transferred, and that it is now in the hands of lawful possessors, at least as certainly as any other right:—we have left the advocates of the people no other plea than that of convenience. Let us, therefore, now consider what the people would really gain by a general abolition of the right of patronage. What is most to be desired by such a change is, that the country should be supplied with better ministers. But why should we suppose that the parish will make a wiser choice than the patron? If we suppose mankind actuated by interest, the patron is more likely to choose with caution, because he will suffer more by choosing wrong. By the deficiencies of his minister, or by his vices, he is equally offended with

the rest of the congregation; but he will have this reason more to lament them, that they will be imputed to his absurdity or corruption. The qualifications of a minister are well known to be learning and piety. Of his learning the patron is probably the only judge in the parish; and of his piety not less a judge than others; and is more likely to enquire minutely and diligently before he gives a presentation, than one of the parochial rabble, who can give nothing but a vote. It may be urged, that though the parish might not choose better ministers, they would at least choose ministers whom they like better, and who would therefore officiate with greater efficacy. That ignorance and perverseness should always obtain what they like, was never considered as the end of government; of which it is the great and standing benefit, that the wise see for the simple, and the regular act for the capricious. But that this argument supposes the people capable of judging, and resolute to act according to their best judgments, though this be sufficiently absurd, it is not all its absurdity. It supposes not only wisdom, but unanimity in those, who upon no other occasions are unanimous or wise. If by some strange concurrence all the voices of a parish should unite in the choice of any single man, though I could not charge the patron with injustice for presenting a minister, I should censure him as unkind and injudicious. But it is evident, that as in all other popular elections there will be contrariety of judgment and acrimony of passion, a parish upon every vacancy would break into factions, and the contest for the choice of a minister would set neighbours at variance, and bring

discord into families. The minister would be taught all the arts of a candidate, would flatter some, and bribe others; and the electors, as in all other cases, would call for holidays and ale, and break the heads of each other during the jollity of the canvass. The time must, however, come at last, when one of the factions must prevail, and one of the ministers get possession of the church. On what terms does he enter upon his ministry but those of enmity with half his parish? By what prudence or what diligence can he hope to conciliate the affections of that party by whose defeat he has obtained his living? Every man who voted against him will enter the church with hanging head and downcast eyes, afraid to encounter that neighbour by whose vote and influence he has been overpowered. He will hate his neighbour for opposing him, and his minister for having prospered by the opposition; and as he will never see him but with pain, he will never see him but with hatred. Of a minister presented by the patron, the parish has seldom any thing worse to say than that they do not know him. Of a minister chosen by a popular contest, all those who do not favour him, have nursed up in their bosoms principles of hatred and reasons of rejection. Anger is excited principally by pride. The pride of a common man is very little exasperated by the supposed usurpation of an acknowledged superior. He bears only his little share of a general evil, and suffers in common with the whole parish; but when the contest is between equals, the defeat has many aggravations, and he that is defeated by his next neighbour, is seldom satisfied without some revenge: and it is hard to say what bitterness of

malignity would prevail in a parish where these elections should happen to be frequent, and the enmity of opposition should be rekindled before it had cooled."

ON PULPIT CENSURE.

[In 1776, in the course of a contested election for the borough of Dumfermline, one of the agents for a candidate who was charged with having been unfaithful to his employer, and with having deserted to the opposite party for a pecuniary reward, attacked very rudely in a newspaper the Rev. Mr. James Thomson, one of the ministers of that place, on account of a supposed allusion to him in one of his sermons. Upon this the minister, on a subsequent Sunday, arraigned him by name from the pulpit with some severity; and the agent, after the sermon was over, rose up and asked the minister aloud, "What bribe he had received for telling so many lies from the chair of verity?" The person arraigned, and his father and brother, who also had a share both of the reproof from the pulpit, and in the retaliation, brought an action against Mr. Thomson, in the Court of Session, for defamation and damages, and the Court decided against the reverend defendant. Dr. Johnson was satisfied that this judgment was wrong, and dictated to Mr. Boswell, who was one of the defendant's counsel, the following argument in confutation of it.]

"Of the censure pronounced from the pulpit, our determination must be formed, as in other cases,

by a consideration of the act itself, and the particular circumstances with which it is invested.

"The right of censure and rebuke seems necessarily appendant to the pastoral office. He, to whom the care of a congregation is entrusted, is considered as the shepherd of a flock, as the teacher of a school, as the father of a family. As a shepherd tending not his own sheep but those of his master, he is answerable for those that stray, and that lose themselves by straying. But no man can be answerable for losses which he has not power to prevent, or for vagrancy which he has not authority to restrain.

"As a teacher giving instruction for wages, and liable to reproach, if those whom he undertakes to inform make no proficiency, he must have the power of enforcing attendance, of awakening negligence, and repressing contradiction.

"As a father, he possesses the paternal authority of admonition, rebuke, and punishment. He cannot, without reducing his office to an empty name, be hindered from the exercise of any practice necessary to stimulate the idle, to reform the vicious, to check the petulant, and correct the stubborn.

"If we enquire into the practice of the primitive church, we shall, I believe, find the ministers of the word exercising the whole authority of this complicated character. We shall find them not only encouraging the good by exhortation, but terrifying the wicked by reproof and denunciation. In the earliest ages of the Church, while religion was yet pure from secular advantages, the punishment of sinners was publick censure, and open penance; penalties inflicted

merely by ecclesiastical authority, at a time when the church had yet no help from the civil power: while the hand of the magistrate lifted only the rod of persecution; and when governors were ready to afford a refuge to all those who fled from clerical authority.

"That the Church, therefore, had once a power of publick censure is evident, because that power was frequently exercised. That it borrowed not its power from the civil authority is likewise certain, because civil authority was at that time its enemy.

"The hour came at length, when after three hundred years of struggle and distress, Truth took possession of imperial power, and the civil laws lent their aid to the ecclesiastical constitutions. The magistrate from that time co-operated with the priest, and clerical sentences were made efficacious by secular force. But the State, when it came to the assistance of the Church, had no intention to diminish its authority. Those rebukes and those censures which were lawful before, were lawful still. But they had hitherto operated only upon voluntary submission. The refractory and contemptuous were at first in no danger of temporal severities, except what they might suffer from the reproaches of conscience, or the detestation of their fellow Christians. When religion obtained the support of law, if admonitions and censures had no effect, they were seconded by the magistrates with coercion and punishment.

"It therefore appears from ecclesiastical history, that the right of inflicting shame by publick censure has been always considered as inherent in the Church;

and that this right was not conferred by the civil power; for it was exercised when the civil power operated against it. By the civil power it was never taken away; for the Christian magistrate interposed his office, not to rescue sinners from censure, but to supply more powerful means of reformation; to add pain where shame was insufficient; and when men were proclaimed unworthy of the society of the faithful, to restrain them by imprisonment, from spreading abroad the contagion of wickedness.

"It is not improbable that from this acknowledged power of publick censure, grew in time the practice of auricular confession. Those who dreaded the blast of publick reprehension, were willing to submit themselves to the priest, by a private accusation of themselves; and to obtain a reconciliation with the Church by a kind of clandestine absolution and invisible penance; conditions with which the priest would in times of ignorance and corruption easily comply, as they increased his influence, by adding the knowledge of secret sins to that of notorious offences, and enlarged his authority, by making him the sole arbiter of the terms of reconcilement.

"From this bondage the Reformation set us free. The minister has no longer power to press into the retirements of conscience, or torture us by interrogatories, or put himself in possession of our secrets and our lives. But though we have thus controlled his usurpations, his just and original power remains unimpaired. He may still see, though he may not pry: he may yet hear, though he may not question. And that knowledge which his eyes and ears force

upon him it is still his duty to use, for the benefit of his flock. A father who lives near a wicked neighbour, may forbid a son to frequent his company. A minister who has in his congregation a man of open and scandalous wickedness, may warn his parishioners to shun his conversation. To warn them is not only lawful, but not to warn them would be criminal. He may warn them one by one in friendly converse, or by a parochial visitation. But if he may warn each man singly, what shall forbid him to warn them altogether? Of that which is to be made known to all, how is there any difference whether it be communicated to each singly, or to all together? What is known to all, must necessarily be publick, whether it shall be publick at once or publick by degrees, is the only question. And of a sudden and solemn publication the impression is deeper, and the warning more effectual.

"It may easily be urged, if a minister be thus left at liberty to delate sinners from the pulpit, and to publish at will the crimes of a parishioner, he may often blast the innocent and distress the timorous. He may be suspicious, and condemn without evidence: he may be rash, and judge without examination: he may be severe, and treat slight offences with too much harshness: he may be malignant and partial, and gratify his private interest or resentment under the shelter of his pastoral character.

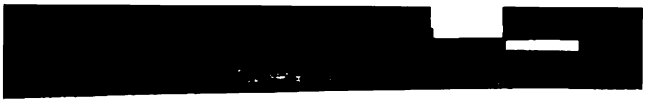
"Of all this there is possibility, and of all this there is danger. But if possibility of evil be to exclude good, no good ever can be done. If nothing is to be attempted in which there is danger, we must all sink into hopeless inactivity. The evils that may

be feared from this practice arise not from any defect in the institution, but from the infirmities of human nature. Power, in whatever hands it is placed, will be sometimes improperly exerted; yet courts of law must judge, though they will sometimes judge amiss. A father must instruct his children, though he himself may often want instruction. A minister must censure sinners, though his censure may be sometimes erroneous by want of judgment, and sometimes unjust by want of honesty.

"If we examine the circumstances of the present case, we shall find the sentence neither erroneous nor unjust: we shall find no breach of private confidence, no intrusion into secret transactions. The fact was notorious and indubitable; so easy to be proved, that no proof was desired. The act was base and treacherous, the perpetration insolent and open, and the example naturally mischievous. The minister, however, being retired and recluse, had not yet heard what was publickly known throughout the parish; and on occasion of a publick election, warned his people, according to his duty, against the crimes which publick elections frequently produce. His warning was felt by one of his parishioners, as pointed particularly at himself. But instead of producing, as might be wished, private compunction and immediate reformation, it kindled only rage and resentment. He charged his minister, in a publick paper, with scandal, defamation, and falsehood. The minister, thus reproached, had his own character to vindicate, upon which his pastoral authority must necessarily depend. To be charged with a defama-

tory lie, is an injury which no man patiently endures in common life. To be charged with polluting the pastoral office with scandal and falsehood, was a violation of character still more atrocious, as it affected not only his personal but his clerical veracity. His indignation naturally rose in proportion to his honesty, and with all the fortitude of injured honesty, he dared this calumniator in the church, and at once exonerated himself from censure, and rescued his flock from deception and from danger. The man whom he accuses pretends not to be innocent: or at least only pretends; for he declines a trial. The crime of which he is accused has frequent opportunities and strong temptations. It has already spread far, with much depravation of private morals, and much injury to publick happiness. To warn the people, therefore, against it, was not wanton and officious, but necessary and pastoral.

"What then is the fault with which this worthy minister is charged? He has usurped no dominion over conscience. He has exerted no authority in support of doubtful and controverted opinions. He has not dragged into light a bashful and corrigible sinner. His censure was directed against a breach of morality, against an act which no man justifies. The man who appropriated this censure to himself, is evidently and notoriously guilty. His consciousness of his own wickedness incited him to attack his faithful reprover with open insolence and printed accusations. Such an attack made defence necessary; and we hope it will be at last decided that the means of defence were just and lawful."



REVIEWS

AND

CRITICISMS.

LETTER

ON

DU HALDE'S HISTORY OF CHINA,

1738.

THERE are few nations in the world more talked of, or less known, than the Chinese. The confused and imperfect account which travellers have given of their grandeur, their sciences and their policy, have hitherto excited admiration, but have not been sufficient to satisfy even a superficial curiosity. I therefore return you my thanks for having undertaken, at so great an expence, to convey to English readers the most copious and accurate account, yet published, of that remote and celebrated people, whose antiquity, magnificence, power, wisdom, peculiar customs, and excellent constitution, undoubtedly deserve the attention of the publick.

As the satisfaction found in reading descriptions of distant countries arises from a comparison which every reader naturally makes, between the ideas which he receives from the relation, and those which were familiar to him before; or, in other words, between the countries with which he is acquainted, and that which the author displays to his imagination; so it

varies according to the likeness or dissimilitude of the manners of the two nations. Any custom or law unheard and unthought of before, strikes us with that *surprise* which is the effect of novelty; but a practice conformable to our own pleases us, because it flatters our self-love, by showing us that our opinions are approved by the general concurrence of mankind. Of these two pleasures, the first is more violent, the other more lasting; the first seems to partake more of instinct than reason, and is not easily to be explained, or defined; the latter has its foundation in good sense and reflection, and evidently depends on the same principles with most human passions.

An attentive reader will frequently feel each of these agreeable emotions in the perusal of Du Halde. He will find a calm, peaceful satisfaction, when he reads the moral precepts and wise instructions of the Chinese sages; he will find that virtue is in every place the same, and will look with new contempt on those wild reasoners, who affirm that morality is merely ideal, and that the distinctions between good and ill are wholly chimerical.

But he will enjoy all the pleasure that novelty can afford, when he becomes acquainted with the Chinese government and constitution; he will be amazed to find that there is a country where nobility and knowledge are the same, where men advance in rank as they advance in learning, and promotion is the effect of strenuous industry, where no man thinks ignorance a mark of greatness, or laziness the privilege of high

be still heightened by the rela-

tions he will there meet with of honest ministers, who, however incredible it may seem, have been seen more than once in that monarchy, and have adventured to admonish the emperors of any deviation from the laws of their country, or any errour in their conduct, that has endangered either their own safety, or the happiness of their people. He will read of emperors, who, when they have been addressed in this manner, have neither stormed, nor threatened, nor kicked their ministers, nor thought it majestic to be obstinate in the wrong: but have, with a greatness of mind worthy of a Chinese monarch, brought their actions willingly to the test of reason, law, and morality, and scorned to exert their power in defence of that which they could not support by argument.

I must confess my wonder at these relations was very great, and had been much greater, had I not often entertained my imagination with an instance of the like conduct in a prince of England, on an occasion that happened not quite a century ago, and which I shall relate, that so remarkable an example of spirit and firmness in a subject, and of conviction and compliance in a prince, may not be forgotten. And I hope you will look upon this letter as intended to do honour to my country, and not to serve your interest by promoting your undertaking.

The prince, at the christening of his first son, had appointed a noble duke to stand as proxy for the father of the princess, without regard to the claim of a marquis, (heir apparent to a higher title,) to whom, as lord of the bed-chamber then in waiting, that honour properly belonged.——The marquis was wholly

unacquainted with the affair, till he heard at dinner the duke's health drunk by the name of the prince he was that evening to represent. This he took an opportunity after dinner of enquiring the reason of, and was informed by the prince's treasurer of his highness's intention. The marquis immediately declared, that he thought his right invaded, and his honour injured, which he could not bear without requiring satisfaction from the usurper of his privileges; nor would he longer serve a prince who paid no regard to his lawful pretensions. The treasurer could not deny that the marquis's claim was incontestable, and by his permission acquainted the prince with his resolution. The prince thereupon sending for the marquis, demanded, with a resentful and imperious air, how he could dispute his commands, and by what authority he presumed to controul him in the management of his own family, and the christening of his own son. The marquis answered, that he did not encroach upon the prince's right, but only defended his own: that he thought his honour concerned, and, as he was a young man, would not enter the world with the loss of his reputation. The prince, exasperated to a very high degree, repeated his commands; but the marquis, with a spirit and firmness not to be depressed or shaken, persisted in his determination to assert his claim, and concluded with declaring that he would do himself the justice that was denied him, and that not the prince himself should trample on his character. He was then ordered to withdraw, and the duke coming to him, assured him, that the honour was offered him unasked; that when he accepted it, he

was not informed of his lordship's claim, and that now he very willingly resigned it. The marquis very gracefully acknowledged the civility of the duke's expressions, and declared himself satisfied with his grace's conduct; but thought it inconsistent with his honour to accept the representation as a cession of the duke, or on any other terms than as his own acknowledged right. The prince, being informed of the whole conversation, and having upon enquiry found all the precedents on the marquis's side, thought it below his dignity to persist in an error, and restoring the marquis to his right upon his own conditions, continued him in his favour, believing that he might safely trust his affairs in the hands of a man, who had so nice a sense of honour, and so much spirit to assert it.

EUBULUS.

REVIEW

OF THE

ACCOUNT OF THE CONDUCT OF THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.*

THE universal regard, which is paid by mankind to such accounts of publick transactions as have been written by those who were engaged in them, may be, with great probability, ascribed to that ardent love of truth, which nature has kindled in the breast of man, and which remains even where every other laudable passion is extinguished. We cannot but read such narratives with uncommon curiosity, because we consider the writer as indubitably possessed of the ability to give us just representations, and do not always reflect, that, very often, proportionate to the opportunities of knowing the truth, are the temptations to disguise it.

Authors of this kind have at least an incontestable superiority over those whose passions are the same, and whose knowledge is less. It is evident that those who write in their own defence, discover often more impartiality, and less contempt of evidence,

* From the Gentleman's Magazine, 1742.

than the advocates which faction or interest have raised in their favour.

It is, however, to be remembered, that the parent of all Memoirs, is the ambition of being distinguished from the herd of mankind, and the fear of either infamy or oblivion, passions which cannot but have some degree of influence, and which may at least affect the writer's choice of facts, though they may not prevail upon him to advance known falsehoods. He may aggravate or extenuate particular circumstances, though he preserves the general transaction; as the general likeness may be preserved in painting, though a blemish is hid or a beauty improved.

Every man that is solicitous about the esteem of others, is in a great degree desirous of his own, and makes by consequence his first apology for his conduct to himself; and when he has once deceived his own heart, which is for the greatest part too easy a task, he propagates the deceit in the world, without reluctance or consciousness of falsehood.

But to what purpose, it may be asked, are such reflections, except to produce a general incredulity, and to make history of no use? The man who knows not the truth *cannot*, and he who knows it *will not* tell it; what then remains, but to distrust every relation, and live in perpetual negligence of past events; or, what is still more disagreeable, in perpetual suspense?

That by such remarks some incredulity is indeed produced, cannot be denied, but distrust is a necessary qualification of a student in history. Distrust quickens his discernment of different degrees of pro-

bability, animates his search after evidence, and perhaps heightens his pleasure at the discovery of truth; for truth, though not always obvious, is generally discoverable, nor is it any where more likely to be found than in private memoirs, which are generally published at a time when any gross falsehood may be detected by living witnesses, and which always contain a thousand incidents, of which the writer could not have acquired a certain knowledge, and which he has no reason for disguising.

Such is the Account lately published by the Duchess of Marlborough, of her own Conduct, by which those who are very little concerned about the character which it is principally intended to preserve or to retrieve, may be entertained and instructed. By the perusal of this account, the enquirer into human nature may obtain an intimate acquaintance with the characters of those whose names have crowded the latest histories, and discover the relation between their minds and their actions. The historian may trace the progress of great transactions, and discover the secret causes of important events. And, to mention one use more, the polite writer may learn an unaffected dignity of style, and an artful simplicity of narration.

The method of confirming her relation, by inserting at length the letters that every transaction occasioned, has not only set the greatest part of the work above the danger of confutation, but has added to the entertainment of the reader, who has now the satisfaction of forming to himself the characters of the actors, and judging how nearly such as have hitherto

been given of them agree with those which they now give of themselves.

Even of those whose letters could not be made publick, we have a more exact knowledge than can be expected from general histories, because we see them in their private apartments, in their careless hours, and observe those actions in which they indulged their own inclinations, without any regard to censure or applause.

Thus it is, that we are made acquainted with the disposition of King William, of whom it may be collected from various instances that he was arbitrary, insolent, gloomy, rapacious, and brutal; that he was at all times disposed to play the tyrant; that he had neither in great things nor in small the manners of a gentleman; that he was capable of gaining money by mean artifices, and that he only regarded his promise when it was his interest to keep it.

There are doubtless great numbers who will be offended with this delineation of the mind of the immortal William, but they whose honesty or sense enables them to consider impartially the events of his reign, will now be enabled to discover the reason of the frequent oppositions which he encountered, and of the personal affronts which he was sometimes forced to endure. They will observe that it is not always sufficient to do right, and that it is often necessary to add gracefulness to virtue. They will recollect how vain it is to endeavour to gain men by great qualities, while our cursory behaviour is insolent and offensive; and that those may be disgusted by little things, who can scarcely be pleased with great.

Charles the Second, by his affability and politeness, made himself the idol of the nation, which he betrayed and sold. William the Third was, for his insolence and brutality, hated by that people which he protected and enriched:—had the best part of these two characters been united in one prince, the house of Bourbon had fallen before him.

It is not without pain that the reader observes a shade encroaching upon the light with which the memory of queen Mary has been hitherto invested—the popular, the beneficent, the pious, the celestial queen Mary, from whose presence none ever withdrew without an addition to his happiness. What can be charged upon this delight of human kind? Nothing less than that *she wanted bowels*, and was insolent with her power; that she was resentful, and pertinacious in her resentment; that she descended to mean acts of revenge, when heavier vengeance was not in her power; that she was desirous of controuling where she had no authority, and backward to forgive, even when she had no real injury to complain of.

This is a character so different from all those that have been hitherto given of this celebrated princess, that the reader stands in suspense, till he considers the inconsistencies in human conduct, remembers that no virtue is without its weakness, and considers that queen Mary's character has hitherto had this great advantage, that it has only been compared with those of kings.

The greatest number of the letters inserted in this

account were written by queen Anne, of which it may be truly observed, that they will be equally useful for the confutation of those who have exalted or depressed her character. They are written with great purity and correctness, without any forced expressions, affected phrases, or unnatural sentiments, and show uncommon clearness of understanding, tenderness of affection, and rectitude of intention; but discover at the same time, a temper timorous, anxious, and impatient of misfortune, a tendency to burst into complaints, helpless dependance on the affection of others, and a weak desire of moving compassion. There is indeed nothing insolent or overbearing, but then there is nothing great, or firm, or regal; nothing that enforces obedience and respect, or which does not rather invite opposition and petulance. She seems born for friendship, not for government; and to be unable to regulate the conduct of others, otherwise than by her own example.

That this character is just, appears from the occurrences in her reign, in which the nation was governed for many years by a party whose principles she detested, but whose influence she knew not how to obviate, and to whose schemes she was subservient against her inclination.

The charge of tyrannizing over her, which was made by turns against each party, proves that, in the opinion of both, she was easily to be governed; and though it may be supposed that the letters here published were selected with some regard to respect and ceremony, it appears plainly enough from them

I should pay the same respect to a Governour of the Foundlings. Yet the consciousness of my own rectitude of intention incites me to ask once again, how I have offended?

There are only three subjects upon which my unlucky pen has happened to venture. Tea; the author of the Journal; and the Foundling Hospital.

Of Tea what have I said? That I have drank it twenty years without hurt, and therefore believe it not to be poison; that if it dries the fibres, it cannot soften them; that if it constringes, it cannot relax. I have modestly doubted whether it has diminished the strength of our men, or the beauty of our women; and whether it much hinders the progress of our woollen or iron manufactures; but I allowed it to be a barren superfluity, neither medicinal nor nutritious, that neither supplied strength nor cheerfulness, neither relieved weariness, nor exhilarated sorrow: I inserted, without charge or suspicion of falsehood, the sums exported to purchase it; and proposed a law to prohibit it for ever.

Of the author I unfortunately said, that his injunction was somewhat too magisterial. This I said before I knew that he was a Governour of the Foundlings; but he seems inclined to punish this failure of respect, as the czar of Muscovy made war upon Sweden, because he was not treated with sufficient honours when he passed through the country in disguise. Yet was not this irreverence without extenuation. Something was said of the merit of *meaning well*, and the Journalist was declared to

that she was what she has been represented, little more than the slave of the Marlborough family.

The inferior characters, as they are of less importance, are less accurately delineated; the picture of Harley is at least partially drawn, all the deformities are heightened, and the beauties, for beauties of mind he certainly had, are entirely omitted.

REVIEW

OF

MEMOIRS OF THE COURT OF AUGUSTUS;

By THOMAS BLACKWELL, J. U. D.

Principal of MARISHAL-COLLEGE in the University of ABERDEEN.*

THE first effect which this book has upon the reader is that of disgusting him with the author's vanity. He endeavours to persuade the world, that here are some new treasures of literature spread before his eyes; that something is discovered, which to this happy day had been concealed in darkness; that by his diligence time has been robbed of some valuable monument which he was on the point of devouring; and that names and facts doomed to oblivion are now restored to fame.

How must the unlearned reader be surprised, when he shall be told that Mr. Blackwell has neither digged in the ruins of any demolished city, nor found out the way to the library of Fez; nor had a single book in his hands, that has not been in the possession of

* Literary Magazine, Vol. I. p. 41. 1756.

every man that was inclined to read it, for years and ages; and that his book relates to a people who above all others have furnished employment to the studious, and amusements to the idle; who have scarcely left behind them a coin or a stone, which has not been examined and explained a thousand times, and whose dress, and food, and household stuff, it has been the pride of learning to understand.

A man need not fear to incur the imputation of vicious diffidence or affected humility, who should have forborn to promise many novelties, when he perceived such multitudes of writers possessed of the same materials, and intent upon the same purpose. Mr. Blackwell knows well the opinion of Horace, concerning those that open their undertakings with magnificent promises; and he knows likewise the dictates of Common Sense and Common Honesty, names of greater authority than that of Horace, who direct that no man should promise what he cannot perform.

I do not mean to declare that this volume has nothing new, or that the labours of those who have gone before our author, have made his performance an useless addition to the burden of literature. New works may be constructed with old materials, the disposition of the parts may shew contrivance, the ornaments interspersed may discover elegance.

It is not always without good effect that men of proper qualifications write in succession on the same subject, even when the latter add nothing to the information given by the former; for the same ideas may be delivered more intelligibly or more delightfully by one than by another, or with attractions that

may lure minds of a different form. No writer pleases all, and every writer may please some.

But after all, to inherit is not to acquire; to decorate is not to make; and the man who had nothing to do but to read the ancient authors, who mention the Roman affairs, and reduce them to common-places, ought not to boast himself as a great benefactor to the studious world.

After a preface of boast, and a letter of flattery, in which he seems to imitate the address of Horace in his *vile potabis modicis Sabinum*—he opens his book with telling us, that the "Roman republic, after the horrible proscription, was no more at *bleeding Rome*. The regal power of her consuls, the authority of her senate, and the majesty of her people, were now trampled under foot; these [for those] divine laws and hallowed customs, that had been the essence of her constitution—were set at nought, and her best friends were lying exposed in their blood."

These were surely very dismal times to those who suffered; but I know not why any one but a school-boy in his declamation should whine over the commonwealth of Rome, which grew great only by the misery of the rest of mankind. The Romans, like others, as soon as they grew rich grew corrupt, and, in their corruption, sold the lives and freedoms of themselves, and of one another.

"About this time Brutus had his patience put to the *highest* trial: he had been married to Clodia; but whether the family did not please him, or whether he was dissatisfied with the lady's behaviour

during his absence, he soon entertained thoughts of a separation. *This raised a good deal of talk*, and the women of the Clodian family inveighed bitterly against Brutus—but he married Portia, who was worthy of such a father as M. Cato, and such a husband as M. Brutus. She had a soul capable of an *exalted passion*, and found a proper object to raise and give it a sanction; she did not only love but adored her husband; his worth, his truth, his every shining and heroic quality, made her gaze on him like a god, while the endearing returns of esteem and tenderness she met with, brought her joy, her pride, her every wish to centre in her beloved Brutus."

When the reader has been awakened by this rapturous preparation he hears the whole story of Portia in the same luxuriant style, till she breathed out her last, a little before the *bloody proscription*, and " Brutus complained heavily of his friends at Rome, as not having paid due attention to his *Lady* in the declining state of her health."

He is a great lover of modern terms. His senators and their wives are *Gentlemen* and *Ladies*. In this review of Brutus's army, who *was under the command of gallant men, not braver officers than true patriots*, he tells us, " that Sextus the Questor was *Paymaster, Secretary at War, and Commissary General*, and that the *sacred discipline* of the Romans required the closest connexion, like that of father and son, to subsist between the General of an army and his Questor. Cicero was *General of the Cavalry*, and the next *general officer* was Flavius, *Master of the Artillery*, the elder Len-

tulus was *Admiral*, and the younger *rode* in the *Band of Volunteers;* under these the tribunes, *with many others too tedious to name.*" Lentulus, however, was but a subordinate officer; for we are informed afterwards, that the Romans had made Sextus Pompeius *Lord High Admiral in all the seas of their dominions.*

Among other affectations of this writer is a furious and unnecessary zeal for liberty, or rather for one form of government as preferable to another. This indeed might be suffered, because political institution is a subject in which men have always differed, and if they continue to obey their lawful governours, and attempt not to make innovations for the sake of their favourite schemes, they may differ for ever without any just reproach from one another. But who can bear the hardy champion who ventures nothing? who in full security undertakes the defence of the assassination of Cæsar, and declares his resolution *to speak plain?* Yet let not just sentiments be overlooked: he has justly observed, that the greater part of mankind will be naturally prejudiced against Brutus, for all feel the benefits of private friendship; but few can discern the advantages of a well-constituted government *.

We know not whether some apology may not be necessary for the distance between the first account of this book and its continuation. The truth is, that this work not being forced upon our attention by

* The first part of this Review closed here. What follows did not appear until seven months after. To which delay the writer alludes with provoking severity. C.

much publick applause or censure, was sometimes neglected, and sometimes forgotten; nor would it, perhaps, have been now resumed, but that we might avoid to disappoint our readers by an abrupt desertion of any subject.

It is not our design to criticise the facts of this history, but the style; not the veracity, but the address of the writer; for, an account of the ancient Romans, as it cannot nearly interest any present reader, and must be drawn from writings that have been long known, can owe its value only to the language in which it is delivered, and the reflections with which it is accompanied. Dr. Blackwell, however, seems to have heated his imagination so as to be much affected with every event, and to believe that he can affect others. Enthusiasm is indeed sufficiently contagious; but I never found any of his readers much enamoured of the *glorious Pompey, the patriot approv'd,* or much incensed against the *lawless Cæsar,* whom this author probably stabs every day and night in his sleeping or waking dreams.

He is come too late into the world with his fury for freedom, with his Brutus and Cassius. We have all on this side of the Tweed long since settled our opinions: his zeal for Roman liberty and declamations against the violators of the republican constitution, only stand now in the reader's way, who wishes to proceed in the narrative without the interruption of epithets and exclamations. It is not easy to forbear laughter at a man so bold in fighting shadows, so busy in a dispute two thousand years past, and so zealous for the honour of a people who while they

were poor robbed mankind, and as soon as they became rich, robbed one another. Of these robberies our author seems to have no very quick sense, except when they are committed by Cæsar's party, for every act is sanctified by the name of a patriot.

If this author's skill in ancient literature were less generally acknowledged, one might sometimes suspect that he had too frequently consulted the French writers. He tells us that Archelaus the Rhodian made a speech to Cassius, and *in so saying* dropt some tears, and that Cassius after the reduction of Rhodes was *covered with glory*.—Deiotarus was a keen and happy spirit—The ingrate Castor kept his court.

His great delight is to shew his universal acquaintance with terms of art, with words that every other polite writer has avoided and despised. When Pompey conquered the pirates, he destroyed fifteen hundred ships of the line.—The Xanthian parapets were tore down.—Brutus, suspecting that his troops were plundering, commanded the trumpets to sound to their colours.—Most people understood the act of attainder passed by the senate.—The Numidian troopers were unlikely in their appearance.—The Numidians beat up one quarter after another.—Salvidienus resolved to pass his men over in boats of leather, and he gave orders for equipping a sufficient number of that sort of small craft.—Pompey had light agile frigates, and fought in a strait where the current and caverns occasion swirls and a roll.—A sharp out-look was kept by the admiral.—It is a run of about fifty Roman miles.—Brutus broke Lipella

in the sight of the army. Mark Antony garbled the senate. He was a brave man, well qualified for a commodore.

In his choice of phrases he frequently uses words with great solemnity, which every other mouth and pen has appropriated to jocularity and levity! The Rhodians gave up the contest, and in poor plight fled back to Rhodes.—Boys and girls were easily kidnapped.—Deiotarus was a mighty believer of augury.—Deiotarus destroyed his ungracious progeny.—The regularity of the Romans was their mortal aversion.—They desired the consuls to curb such heinous doings.—He had such a shrewd invention, that no side of a question came amiss to him.—Brutus found his mistress a coquettish creature.

He sometimes, with most unlucky dexterity, mixes the grand and the burlesque together; *the violation of faith, Sir*, says Cassius, *lies at the door of the Rhodians by reiterated acts of perfidy.*—The iron grate fell down, crushed those under it to death, and catched the rest as in a trap.—When the Xanthians heard the military shout, and saw the flame mount, they concluded there would be no mercy. It was now about sun-set, and they had been at hot work since noon.

He has often words or phrases with which our language has hitherto had no knowledge.—One was a heart-friend to the republic.—A deed was expeded.—The Numidians begun to reel, and were in hazard of falling into confusion.—The tutor embraced his pupil close in his arms.—Four hundred women were taxed who have no doubt been the wives of the best

Roman citizens.—Men not born to action are inconsequential in government.—Collectitious troops.—The foot by their violent attack began the fatal break in the Phasaliac field.—He and his brother, with a politic common to other countries, had taken opposite sides.

His epithets are of the gaudy or hyperbolical kind. The glorious news—eager hopes and dismal fears—bleeding Rome—divine laws and hallowed customs—merciless war—intense anxiety.

Sometimes the reader is suddenly ravished with a sonorous sentence, of which when the noise is past, the meaning does not long remain. When Brutus set his legions to fill a moat, instead of heavy dragging and slow toil, they set about it with huzzas and racing, as if they had been striving at the Olympick games. They hurled impetuous down the huge trees and stones, and with shouts forced them into the water; so that the work, expected to continue half the campaign, was with rapid toil completed in a few days. Brutus's soldiers fell to the gate with resistless fury, it gave way at last with hideous crash. —This great and good man, doing his duty to his country, received a mortal wound, and glorious fell in the cause of Rome; may his memory be ever dear to all lovers of liberty, learning, and humanity!—This promise ought ever to embalm his memory.—The queen of nations was torn by no foreign invader.—Rome fell a sacrifice to her own sons, and was ravaged by her unnatural offspring: all the great men of the state, all the good, all the holy, were openly murdered by the wickedest and worst.—

Little islands cover the harbour of Brindisi, and form the narrow outlet from the numerous creeks that compose its capacious port.—At the appearance of Brutus and Cassius a shout of joy rent the heavens from the surrounding multitudes.

Such are the flowers which may be gathered by every hand in every part of this garden of eloquence. But having thus freely mentioned our Author's faults, it remains that we acknowledge his merit; and confess that this book is the work of a man of letters, that it is full of events displayed with accuracy, and related with vivacity; and though it is sufficiently defective to crush the vanity of its Author, it is sufficiently entertaining to invite readers.

REVIEW

OF

FOUR LETTERS FROM SIR ISAAC NEWTON TO DR. BENTLEY,

CONTAINING

SOME ARGUMENTS IN PROOF OF A DEITY.*

IT will certainly be required, that notice should be taken of a book, however small, written on such a subject, by such an author. Yet I know not whether these Letters will be very satisfactory: for they are answers to enquiries not published; and therefore though they contain many positions of great importance, are in some parts, imperfect and obscure, by their reference to Dr. Bentley's Letters.

Sir Isaac declares, that what he has done is *due to nothing but industry and patient thought;* and indeed long consideration is so necessary in such abstruse enquiries, that it is always dangerous to publish the productions of great men, which are not known to have been designed for the press, and of which it is uncertain whether much patience and thought have been bestowed upon them. The principal question of these Letters gives occasion to observe how even the mind of Newton gains ground gradually upon darkness.

* Literary Magazine, Vol. I. 1756, p. 89.

"As to your first query," says he, "it seems to me, that if the matter of our sun and planets, and all the matter of the universe, were evenly scattered throughout all the heavens, and every particle had an innate gravity towards all the rest, and the whole space throughout which this matter was scattered was but finite; the matter on the outside of this space would by its gravity tend towards all the matter on the inside, and by consequence fall down into the middle of the whole space, and there compose one great spherical mass. But if the matter was evenly disposed throughout an infinite space, it could never convene into one mass, but some of it would convene into one mass, and some into another, so as to make an infinite number of great masses, scattered at great distances from one to another throughout all that infinite space. And thus might the sun and fixed stars be formed, supposing the matter were of a lucid nature. But how the matter should divide itself into two sorts, and that part of it which is fit to compose a shining body, should fall down into one mass and make a sun, and the rest which is fit to compose an opaque body, should coalesce, not into one great body like the shining matter, but into many little ones; or if the sun at first were an opaque body like the planets, or the planets lucid bodies like the sun, how he alone should be changed into a shining body, whilst all they continue opaque, or all they be changed into opaque ones whilst he remains unchanged, I do not think more explicable by mere natural causes, but am forced to ascribe it to the counsel and contrivance of a voluntary agent."

The hypothesis of matter evenly disposed through infinite space, seems to labour with such difficulties, as makes it almost a contradictory supposition, or a supposition destructive of itself.

Matter evenly disposed through infinite space, is either created or eternal; if it was created, it infers a Creator: if it was eternal, it had been from eternity *evenly spread through infinite space;* or it had been once coalesced in masses, and afterwards been diffused. Whatever state was first, must have been from eternity, and what had been from eternity could not be changed, but by a cause beginning to act as it had never acted before, that is, by the voluntary act of some external power. If matter infinitely and evenly diffused was a moment without coalition, it could never coalesce at all by its own power. If matter originally tended to coalesce, it could never be evenly diffused through infinite space. Matter being supposed eternal, there never was a time when it could be diffused before its conglobation, or conglobated before its diffusion.

This Sir Isaac seems by degrees to have understood: for he says, in his second Letter, "The reason why matter evenly scattered through a finite space would convene in the midst, you conceive the same with me; but that there should be a central particle, so accurately placed in the middle, as to be always equally attracted on all sides, and thereby continue without motion, seems to me a supposition fully as hard as to make the sharpest needle stand upright upon its point on a looking-glass. For if the very mathematical centre of the central particle

be not accurately in the very mathematical centre of the attractive power of the whole mass, the particle will not be attracted equally on all sides. And much harder is it to suppose all the particles in an infinite space should be so accurately poised one among another, as to stand still in a perfect equilibrium. For I reckon this as hard as to make not one needle only but an infinite number of them (so many as there are particles in an infinite space) stand accurately poised upon their points. Yet I grant it possible, at least by a divine power; and if they were once to be placed, I agree with you that they would continue in that posture, without motion for ever, unless put into new motion by the same power. When therefore I said, that matter evenly spread through all space, would convene by its gravity into one or more great masses, I understand it of matter not resting in an accurate poise."

Let not it be thought irreverence to this great name if I observe, that by *matter evenly spread* through infinite space, he now finds it necessary to mean *matter not evenly spread.* Matter *not evenly spread* will indeed convene, but it will convene as soon as it exists And, in my opinion, this puzzling question about matter is only how *that could be that never could have been,* or what a man thinks on when he thinks of nothing.

Turn matter on all sides, make it eternal, or of late production, finite or infinite, there can be no regular system produced but by a voluntary and meaning agent. This the great Newton always asserted, and this he asserts in the third letter: but proves in ano-

ther manner, in a manner perhaps more happy and conclusive.

"The hypothesis of deriving the frame of the world by mechanical principles from matter evenly spread through the heavens being inconsistent with my system, I had considered it very little before your letter put me upon it, and therefore trouble you with a line or two more about it, if this comes not too late for your use.

"In my former I represented that the diurnal rotations of the planets could not be derived from gravity, but required a divine arm to impress them. And though gravity might give the planets a motion of descent towards the sun, either directly, or with some little obliquity, yet the transverse motions by which they revolve in their several orbs, required the divine arm to impress them according to the tangents of their orbs. I would now add, that the hypothesis of matter's being at first evenly spread through the heavens, is, in my opinion, inconsistent with the hypothesis of innate gravity, without a supernatural power to reconcile them, and therefore it infers a Deity. For if there be innate gravity it is impossible now for the matter of the earth, and all the planets and stars, to fly up from them, and become evenly spread throughout all the heavens, without a supernatural power; and certainly that which can never be hereafter without a supernatural power, could never be heretofore without the same power."

REVIEW

OF A

JOURNAL OF EIGHT DAYS JOURNEY,

From PORTSMOUTH to KINGSTON UPON THAMES, through SOUTHAMPTON, WILTSHIRE, &c. with Miscellaneous Thoughts, moral and religious; in Sixty-four Letters: addressed to Two LADIES of the Partie. To which is added, An ESSAY on TEA, considered as pernicious to Health, obstructing Industry, and impoverishing the Nation: with an Account of its Growth, and great Consumption in these Kingdoms; with several Political Reflections; and Thoughts on Publick Love: in Thirty-two Letters to Two Ladies.

BY MR. H*****.

OUR readers may perhaps remember that we gave them a short account of this book†, with a letter extracted from it, in November 1756. The author

* From the Literary Magazine, Vol. II. No. xiii. 1757.

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then sent us an injunction to forbear his work till a second edition should appear: this prohibition was rather too magisterial; for an author is no longer the sole master of a book which he has given to the publick; yet he has been punctually obeyed; we had no desire to offend him, and if his character may be estimated by his book, he is a man whose failings may well be pardoned for his virtues.

The second edition is now sent into the world, *corrected and enlarged*, and yielded up by the author to the attacks of criticism. But he shall find in us no malignity of censure. We wish indeed, that among other corrections he had submitted his pages to the inspection of a grammarian, that the elegancies of one line might not have been disgraced by the improprieties of another; but with us to mean well is a degree of merit which overbalances much greater errours than impurity of style.

We have already given in our collections one of the letters, in which Mr. Hanway endeavours to shew, that the consumption of Tea is injurious to the interest of our country. We shall now endeavour to follow him regularly through all his observations on this modern luxury; but it can scarcely be candid, not to make a previous declaration, that he is to expect little justice from the author of this ex-

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tract, a hardened and shameless Tea-drinker, who has for twenty years diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant, whose kettle has scarcely time to cool, who with Tea amuses the evening, with Tea solaces the midnight, and with Tea welcomes the morning.

He begins by refuting a popular notion, that Bohea and Green Tea are leaves of the same shrub, gathered at different times of the year. He is of opinion, that they are produced by different shrubs. The leaves of Tea are gathered in dry weather; then dried and curled over the fire in copper pans. The Chinese use little Green Tea, imagining that it hinders digestion and excites fevers. How it should have either effect is not easily discovered; and if we consider the innumerable prejudices which prevail concerning our own plants, we shall very little regard these opinions of the Chinese vulgar, which experience does not confirm.

When the Chinese drink Tea, they infuse it slightly, and extract only the more volatile parts; but though this seems to require great quantities at a time, yet the author believes, perhaps only because he has an inclination to believe it, that the English and Dutch use more than all the inhabitants of that extensive empire. The Chinese drink it sometimes with acids, seldom with sugar; and this practice our author, who has no intention to find any thing right at home, recommends to his countrymen.

The history of the rise and progress of Tea-drinking is truly curious. Tea was first imported from Holland by the earls of Arlington and Ossory, in

1666; from their ladies the women of quality learned its use. Its price was then three pounds a pound, and continued the same to 1707. In 1715, we began to use Green Tea, and the practice of drinking it descended to the lower class of the people. In 1720, the French began to send it hither by a clandestine commerce. From 1717 to 1726, we imported annually seven hundred thousand pounds. From 1732 to 1742, a million and two hundred thousand pounds were every year brought to London; in some years afterwards three millions; and in 1755, near four millions of pounds, or two thousand tons, in which we are not to reckon that which is surreptitiously introduced, which perhaps is nearly as much. Such quantities are indeed sufficient to alarm us; it is at least worth enquiry to know what are the qualities of such a plant, and what the consequences of such a trade.

He then proceeds to enumerate the mischiefs of Tea, and seems willing to charge upon it every mischief that he can find. He begins, however, by questioning the virtues ascribed to it, and denies that the crews of the Chinese ships are preserved in their voyage homewards from the scurvy by Tea. About this report I have made some enquiry, and though I cannot find that these crews are wholly exempt from scorbutick maladies, they seem to suffer them less than other mariners in any course of equal length. This I ascribe to the Tea, not as possessing any medicinal qualities, but as tempting them to drink more water, to dilute their salt food more copiously, and perhaps to forbear punch, or other strong liquors.

He then proceeds in the pathetick strain, to tell the ladies how, by drinking Tea, they injure their health, and, what is yet more dear, their beauty.

" To what can we ascribe the numerous complaints which prevail? How many *sweet creatures* of your sex languish with a *weak digestion, low spirits, lassitudes, melancholy,* and twenty disorders, which in spite of the *faculty* have yet no names, except the general one of *nervous complaints*? Let them change their diet, and among other articles, leave off drinking Tea, it is more than probable the greatest part of them will be restored to health."

" Hot water is also very hurtful to the teeth. The Chinese do not drink their Tea so hot as we do, and yet thay have bad teeth. This cannot be ascribed entirely to *sugar*, for they use very little, as already observed: but we all know that *hot* or *cold* things which *pain* the teeth, destroy them also. If we drank less Tea, and used gentle *acids* for the gums and teeth, particularly *sour oranges*, though we had a less number of *French dentists*, I fancy this *essential* part of beauty would be much *better* preserved.

" The women in the United Provinces, who *sip Tea* from morning till night, are also as remarkable for *bad teeth.* They also look pallid, and many are troubled with certain feminine disorders arising from a relaxed habit. The Portuguese ladies, on the other hand, entertain with *sweetmeats*, and yet they have very *good teeth*: but their food in general is more of a farinaceous and vegetable kind than ours. They also *drink cold water* instead of *sipping hot*,

and never taste any fermented liquors; for these reasons the use of *sugar* does not seem to be at all pernicious to them."

"Men seem to have lost their stature and comeliness, and women their beauty. I am not *young*, but methinks there is not quite so much *beauty* in this land as there was. Your very *chambermaids* have lost their bloom, I suppose by *sipping Tea*. Even the agitations of the passions at *cards* are not so great enemies to female charms. What Shakespeare ascribes to the concealment of love, is *in this age* more frequently occasioned by the use of *Tea*."

To raise the fright still higher, he quotes an account of a pig's tail scalded with Tea, on which, however, he does not much insist.

Of these dreadful effects, some are perhaps imaginary, and some may have another cause. That there is less beauty in the present race of females, than in those who entered the world with us, all of us are inclined to think on whom beauty has ceased to smile; but our fathers and grandfathers made the same complaint before us; and our posterity will still find beauties irresistibly powerful.

That the diseases commonly called nervous, tremors, fits, habitual depression, and all the maladies which proceed from laxity and debility, are more frequent than in any former time, is, I believe, true, however deplorable. But this new race of evils will not be expelled by the prohibition of Tea. This general languor is the effect of general luxury, of general idleness. If it be most to be found among

Tea-drinkers, the reason is, that Tea is one of the stated amusements of the idle and luxurious. The whole mode of life is changed; every kind of voluntary labour, every exercise that strengthened the nerves and hardened the muscles, is fallen into disuse. The inhabitants are crowded together in populous cities, so that no occasion of life requires much motion; every one is near to all that he wants; and the rich and delicate seldom pass from one street to another, but in carriages of pleasure. Yet we eat and drink, or strive to eat and drink, like the hunters and huntresses, the farmers and the housewives of the former generation; and they that pass ten hours in bed, and eight at cards, and the greater part of the other six at the table, are taught to impute to Tea all the diseases which a life unnatural in all its parts may chance to bring upon them.

Tea, among the greater part of those who use it most, is drunk in no great quantity. As it neither exhilarates the heart, nor stimulates the palate, it is commonly an entertainment merely nominal, a pretence for assembling to prattle, for interrupting business, or diversifying idleness. They who drink one cup, and who drink twenty, are equally punctual in preparing or partaking it; and indeed there are few but discover by their indifference about it, that they are brought together not by the Tea, but the Tea-table. Three cups make the common quantity, so slightly impregnated, that perhaps they might be tinged with the *Athenian cicuta*, and produce less effects than these Letters charge upon Tea.

Our author proceeds to shew yet other bad qualities of this hated leaf.

" Green Tea, when made strong even by infusion, is an *emetick*; nay, I am told it is used as such in China; a decoction of it certainly performs this operation; yet by long use it is drunk by many without such an effect. The infusion also, when it is made strong, and stands long to draw the grosser particles, will *convulse* the bowels; even in the manner *commonly* used, it has this effect on some constitutions, as I have already remarked to you from my *own experience*.

" You see I confess my *weakness* without reserve; but those who are very fond of Tea, if their digestion is weak, and they find themselves disordered, they generally ascribe it to any *cause* except the *true* one. I am aware that the effect just mentioned is imputed to the hot water; let it be so, and my argument is still good: but who pretends to say it is not *partly* owing to particular kinds of Tea? perhaps such as partake of *copperas*, which there is cause to apprehend is sometimes the case: if we judge from the manner in which it is said to be cured, together with its ordinary effects, there is some foundation for this opinion. Put a drop of strong Tea, either *Green* or *Bohea*, but chiefly the former, on the blade of a knife, though it is not corrosive in the same manner as vitriol, yet there appears to be a corrosive quality in it, very different from that of fruit which stains the knife."

He afterwards quotes Paulli to prove that Tea is a *desiccative, and ought not to be used after the for-*

tieth year. I have then long exceeded the limits of permission, but I comfort myself, that all the enemies of Tea cannot be in the right. If Tea be desiccative, according to Paulli, it cannot weaken the fibres, as our author imagines; if it be *emetick*, it must constringe the stomach, rather than relax it.

The formidable quality of tinging the knife, it has in common with acorns, the bark and leaves of oak and every astringent bark or leaf: the copperas which is given to the Tea, is really in the knife. Ink may be made of any ferrugineous matter and astringent vegetable, as it is generally made of galls and copperas.

From Tea the writer digresses to spirituous liquors, about which he will have no controversy with the "Literary Magazine;" we shall therefore insert almost his whole letter, and add to it one testimony, that the mischiefs arising on every side from this compendious mode of drunkenness, are enormous and insupportable; equally to be found among the great and the mean; filling palaces with disquiet and distraction; harder to be borne as it cannot be mentioned; and overwhelming multitudes with incurable diseases and unpitied poverty.

"Though *Tea* and *Gin* have spread their baneful influence over this island and his Majesty's other dominions, yet you may be well assured, that the Governours of the Foundling Hospital will exert their utmost skill and vigilance to prevent the children under their care from being poisoned, or enervated by one or the other. This, however, is not the case of *workhouses:* it is well known, to the shame of those

who are charged with the care of them, that *gin* has been too often permitted to enter their gates; and the debauched appetites of the people who inhabit these houses, has been urged as a reason for it.

" *Desperate* diseases require *desperate* remedies: if laws are rigidly executed against murderers in the highway, those who provide a draught of gin, which we see is *murderous*, ought not to be *countenanced.* I am now informed, that in certain hospitals, where the number of the *sick* used to be about 5600 in 14 years,

From 1704 to 1718, they increased to 8189;

From 1718 to 1734, still augmented to 12,710;

And from 1734 to 1749, *multiplied* to 38,147.

" What a dreadful *spectre* does this exhibit! nor must we wonder, when satisfactory evidence was given before the great council of the nation, that near eight millions of gallons of distilled spirits, at the standard it is commonly reduced to for drinking, was actually consumed annually in drams! the shocking difference in the numbers of the *sick*, and we may presume of the *dead* also, was supposed to keep pace with *gin:* and the most ingenious and unprejudiced physicians ascribed it to this cause. What is to be done under these melancholy circumstances? Shall we still countenance the *distillery*, for the sake of the *revenue;* out of tenderness to the *few* who will suffer by its being abolished; for fear of the madness of the people; or that foreigners will run it in upon us? There can be no *evil* so great as that we now suffer, except the making the same consumption, and paying for it to foreigners in *money*, which I hope never will be the case.

" As to the *revenue*, it certainly may be replaced by taxes upon the *necessaries* of life, even upon the *bread we eat*, or in other words, upon the *land*, which is the great source of supply to the *publick* and to *individuals*. Nor can I persuade myself, but that the people may be *weaned* from the habit of poisoning themselves. The difficulty of *smuggling* a bulky *liquid*, joined to the severity which *ought* to be exercised towards smugglers, whose *illegal* commerce is of so *infernal* a nature, must in time produce the effect desired. Spirituous liquors being abolished, instead of having the most undisciplined and abandoned poor, we might soon boast a race of men, temperate, religious, and industrious even to a *proverb*. We should soon see the *ponderous* burden of the *poor's rate* decrease, and the *beauty* and *strength* of the land rejuvenate. Schools, workhouses, and hospitals, might then be sufficient to clear our streets of distress and misery, which never will be the case whilst the love of poison prevails, and the means of ruin is sold in above one thousand houses in the city of London, two thousand two hundred in Westminster, and one thousand nine hundred and thirty in Holborn and St. Giles's.

" But if other uses still demand *liquid fire*, I would really propose, that it should be sold only in quart bottles, sealed up with the King's seal, with a very high duty, and none sold without being mixed with a *strong emetick*.

" Many become objects of charity by their *intemperance*, and this excludes others who are such by the unavoidable accidents of life, or who cannot by

any means support themselves. Hence it appears, that the introducing *new habits*, of life is the most substantial charity; and that the regulation of charity-schools, hospitals, and workhouses, not the augmentation of their number, can make them answer the wise ends for which they were instituted.

"The children of beggars should be also taken from them, and bred up to labour, as children of the publick. Thus the *distressed* might be relieved, at a sixth part of the present expence; the idle be compelled to *work* or *starve;* and the *mad* be sent to Bedlam. We should not see human nature disgraced by the aged, the maimed, the sickly, and young children begging their bread; nor would compassion be abused by those who have reduced it to an *art* to catch the unwary. Nothing is wanting but common sense and *honesty* in the execution of *laws*.

"To prevent such abuse in the *streets*, seems more practicable than to abolish *bad habits within doors*, where *greater* numbers perish. We see in many familiar instances the fatal effects of example. The careless spending of time among *servants*, who are charged with the care of infants, is often fatal; the nurse frequently destroys the child! the poor infant being left neglected, expires whilst she is sipping her Tea! This may appear to you as *rank prejudice*, or *jest;* but I am assured, from the most *indubitable* evidence, that many very extraordinary cases of this kind have *really* happened among those whose *duty* does not permit of such kind of habits."

"It is partly from such causes, that nurses of the children of the *publick* often *forget* themselves, and

become *impatient* when infants cry: the next step to this, is using extraordinary means to quiet them. I have already mentioned the term *killing nurse*, as known in some workhouses: *Venice treacle*, *poppy water*, and *Godfrey's cordial*, have been the *kind* instruments of lulling the child to his *everlasting* rest. If these *pious* women could send up an ejaculation when the child expired, all was *well*, and no questions *asked* by the *superiours*. An ingenious friend of mine informs me, that this has been so often the case, in some workhouses, that Venice treacle has acquired the appellation of *the Lord have mercy upon me*, in allusion to the nurses' *hackneyed* expression of *pretended* grief when infants expire! *Farewell!*"

I know not upon what observation Mr. Hanway founds his confidence in the Governours of the Foundling Hospital, men of whom I have not any knowledge, but whom I intreat to consider a little the minds as well as bodies of the children. I am inclined to believe Irreligion equally pernicious with Gin and Tea, and therefore think it not unseasonable to mention, that when a few months ago I wandered through the Hospital, I found not a child that seemed to have heard of his creed, or the commandments. To breed up children in this manner, is to rescue them from an early grave, that they may find employment for the gibbet; from dying in innocence, that they may perish by their crimes.

Having considered the effects of Tea upon the health of the drinker, which, I think, he has aggravated in the vehemence of his zeal, and which, after soliciting them by this watery luxury, year after year,

I have not yet felt; he proceeds to examine how it may be shewn to affect our interest; and first calculates the national loss by the time spent in drinking Tea. I have no desire to appear captious, and shall therefore readily admit, that Tea is a liquor not proper for the lower classes of the people, as it supplies no strength to labour, or relief to disease, but gratifies the taste without nourishing the body. It is a barren superfluity, to which those who can hardly procure what nature requires, cannot prudently habituate themselves. Its proper use is to amuse the idle, and relax the studious, and dilute the full meals of those who cannot use exercise, and will not use abstinence. That time is lost in this insipid entertainment, cannot be denied; many trifle away at the Tea-table those moments which would be better spent; but that any national detriment can be inferred from this waste of time, does not evidently appear, because I know not that any work remains undone for want of hands. Our manufactures seem to be limited, not by the possibility of work, but by the possibility of sale.

His next argument is more clear. He affirms, that one hundred and fifty thousand pounds in silver are paid to the Chinese annually, for three millions of pounds of Tea, and that for two millions more brought clandestinely from the neighbouring coasts, we pay, at twenty-pence a pound, one hundred sixty-six thousand six hundred and sixty-six pounds. The author justly conceives, that this computation will waken us; for, says he, "The loss of health, the loss of time, the injury of morals, are not very sen-

sibly felt by some, who are alarmed when you talk of the loss of money." But he excuses the East-India Company, as men not obliged to be political arithmeticians, or to enquire so much what the nation loses, as how themselves may grow rich. It is certain, that they who drink Tea have no right to complain of those that import it; but if Mr. Hanway's computation be just, the importation and the use of it ought at once to be stopped by a penal law.

The author allows one slight argument in favour of Tea, which, in my opinion, might be with far greater justice urged both against that and many other parts of our naval trade. "The Tea-trade employs (he tells us) six ships, and five or six hundred seamen, sent annually to China. It likewise brings in a revenue of three hundred and sixty thousand pounds, which, as a tax on luxury, may be considered as of great utility to the state." The utility of this tax I cannot find; a tax on luxury is no better than another tax, unless it hinders luxury, which cannot be said of the impost upon Tea, while it is thus used by the great and the mean, the rich and the poor. The truth is, that by the loss of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, we procure the means of shifting three hundred and sixty thousand at best, only from one hand to another; but perhaps sometimes into hands by which it is not very honestly employed. Of the five or six hundred seamen sent to China, I am told that sometimes half, commonly a third part, perish in the voyage; so that instead of setting this navigation against the inconveniencies

already alleged, we may add to them, the yearly loss of two hundred men in the prime of life; and reckon, that the trade of China has destroyed ten thousand men since the beginning of this century.

If Tea be thus pernicious, if it impoverishes our country, if it raises temptation, and gives opportunity to illicit commerce, which I have always looked on as one of the strongest evidences of the inefficacy of our law, the weakness of our government, and the corruption of our people, let us at once resolve to prohibit it for ever.

"If the *question* was, how to promote industry most *advantageously*, in lieu of our Tea-trade, supposing every branch of our commerce to be already fully supplied with men and money? If a *quarter* the sum now spent in Tea, were laid out annually in plantations, in making publick gardens, in paving and widening streets, in making *roads*, in rendering *rivers* navigable, erecting *palaces*, building *bridges*, or neat and convenient *houses* where are now only *huts; draining* lands, or rendering those which are now *barren* of some *use;* should we not be gainers, and provide more for health, pleasure, and long life, compared with the consequences of the Tea-trade?"

Our riches would be much better employed to these purposes; but if this project does not please, let us first resolve to save our money, and we shall afterwards very easily find ways to spend it.

REPLY

TO A

PAPER IN THE GAZETTEER

OF MAY 26, 1757*.

It is observed in the sage Gil Blas, that an exasperated author is not easily pacified. I have, therefore, very little hope of making my peace with the writer of the Eight Days Journey: indeed so little, that I have long deliberated whether I should not rather sit silently down under his displeasure, than aggravate my misfortune by a defence of which my heart forbodes the ill success. Deliberation is often useless. I am afraid that I have at last made the wrong choice; and that I might better have resigned my cause, without a struggle, to time and fortune, since I shall run the hazard of a new offence by the necessity of asking him *why he is angry?*

Distress and terrour often discover to us those faults with which we should never have reproached ourselves in a happy state. Yet, dejected as I am,

* From the Literary Magazine, Vol. II. p. 253. With this, I think, Dr. Johnson's labours in this Magazine ceased. It did not survive many months. C.

when I review the transaction between me and this writer, I cannot find that I have been deficient in reverence. When his book was first printed, he hints that I procured a sight of it before it was published. How the sight of it was procured I do not now very exactly remember; but if my curiosity was greater than my prudence, if I laid rash hands on the fatal volume, I have surely suffered like him who burst the box, from which evil rushed into the world.

I took it, however, and inspected it as the work of an author not higher than myself; and was confirmed in my opinion, when I found that these letters were *not written to be printed.* I concluded, however, that though not *written* to be *printed,* they were *printed* to be *read,* and inserted one of them in the collection of November last. Not many days after I received a note, informing me, that I ought to have waited for a more correct edition. This injunction was obeyed. The edition appeared, and I supposed myself at liberty to tell my thoughts upon it, as upon any other book, upon a royal manifesto, or an act of parliament. But see the fate of ignorant temerity! I now find, but find too late, that instead of a writer whose only power is in his pen, I have irritated an important member of an important corporation; a man who, as he tells us in his letters, puts horses to his chariot.

It was allowed to the disputant of old to yield up the controversy with little resistance to the master of forty legions. Those who know how weakly naked truth can defend her advocates, would forgive me if

I should pay the same respect to a Governour of the Foundlings. Yet the consciousness of my own rectitude of intention incites me to ask once again, how I have offended?

There are only three subjects upon which my unlucky pen has happened to venture. Tea; the author of the Journal; and the Foundling Hospital.

Of Tea what have I said? That I have drank it twenty years without hurt, and therefore believe it not to be poison; that if it dries the fibres, it cannot soften them; that if it constringes, it cannot relax. I have modestly doubted whether it has diminished the strength of our men, or the beauty of our women; and whether it much hinders the progress of our woollen or iron manufactures; but I allowed it to be a barren superfluity, neither medicinal nor nutritious, that neither supplied strength nor cheerfulness, neither relieved weariness, nor exhilarated sorrow: I inserted, without charge or suspicion of falsehood, the sums exported to purchase it; and proposed a law to prohibit it for ever.

Of the author I unfortunately said, that his injunction was somewhat too magisterial. This I said before I knew that he was a Governour of the Foundlings; but he seems inclined to punish this failure of respect, as the czar of Muscovy made war upon Sweden, because he was not treated with sufficient honours when he passed through the country in disguise. Yet was not this irreverence without extenuation. Something was said of the merit of *meaning well*, and the Journalist was declared to

be a man *whose failings might well be pardoned for his virtues.* This is the highest praise which human gratitude can confer upon human merit; praise that would have more than satisfied Titus or Augustus, but which I must own to be inadequate and penurious, when offered to the member of an important corporation.

I am asked whether I meant to satirize the man or criticise the writer, when I say that *he believes, only perhaps because he has inclination to believe it, that the English and Dutch consume more Tea than the vast empire of China?* Between the writer and the man I did not at that time consider the distinction. The writer I found not of more than mortal might, and I did not immediately recollect that the man put horses to his chariot. But I did not write wholly without consideration. I knew but two causes of belief, evidence and inclination. What evidence the Journalist could have of the Chinese consumption of Tea, I was not able to discover. The officers of the East-India Company are excluded, they best know why, from the towns and the country of China; they are treated as we treat gypsies and vagrants, and obliged to retire every night to their own hovel. What intelligence such travellers may bring is of no great importance. And though the missionaries boast of having once penetrated further, I think they have never calculated the Tea drank by the Chinese. There being thus no evidence for his opinion, to what could I ascribe it but to inclination?

I am yet charged more heavily for having said,

that *he has no intention to find any thing right at home.* I believe every reader restrained this imputation to the subject which produced it, and supposed me to insinuate only that he meant to spare no part of the Tea-table, whether essence or circumstance. But this line he has selected as an instance of virulence and acrimony, and confutes it by a lofty and splendid panegyrick on himself. He asserts, that he finds many things right at home, and that he loves his country almost to enthusiasm.

I had not the least doubt that he found in his country many things to please him; nor did I suppose that he desired the same inversion of every part of life, as of the use of Tea. The proposal of drinking Tea sour shewed indeed such a disposition to practical paradoxes, that there was reason to fear lest some succeeding letter should recommend the dress of the Picts, or the cookery of the Eskimaux. However, I met with no other innovations, and therefore was willing to hope that he found something right at home.

But his love of his country seemed not to rise quite to enthusiasm, when, amidst his rage against Tea, he made a smooth apology for the East-India Company, as men who might not think themselves obliged to be political arithmeticians. I hold, though no enthusiastick patriot, that every man who lives and trades under the protection of a community, is obliged to consider whether he hurts or benefits those who protect him; and that the most which can be indulged to private interest is a neutral traffick, if any such can be, by which

our country is not injured, though it may not be benefited.

But he now renews his declamation against Tea, notwithstanding the greatness or power of those that have interest or inclination to support it. I know not of what power or greatness he may dream. The importers only have an interest in defending it. I am sure they are not great, and I hope they are not powerful. Those whose inclination leads them to continue this practice, are too numerous, but I believe their power is such as the Journalist may defy without enthusiasm. The love of our country, when it rises to enthusiasm, is an ambiguous and uncertain virtue: when a man is enthusiastick, he ceases to be reasonable, and when he once departs from reason, what will he do but drink sour Tea? As the Journalist, though enthusiastically zealous for his country, has, with regard to smaller things, the placid happiness of philosophical indifference, I can give him no disturbance by advising him to restrain even the love of his country within due limits, lest it should sometimes swell too high, fill the whole capacity of his soul, and leave less room for the love of truth.

Nothing now remains but that I review my positions concerning the Foundling-Hospital. What I declared last month, I declare now once more, that I found none of the children that appeared to have heard of the catechism. It is enquired how I wandered, and how I examined? There is doubtless subtilty in the question; I know not well how to answer it. Happily I did not wander alone; I at-

tended some ladies with another gentleman, who all heard and assisted the enquiry with equal grief and indignation. I did not conceal my observations. Notice was given of this shameful defect soon after, at my request, to one of the highest names of the society. This I am now told is incredible; but since it is true, and the past is out of human power, the most important corporation cannot make it false. But why is it incredible? Because in the rules of the hospital the children are ordered to learn the rudiments of religion. Orders are easily made, but they do not execute themselves. They say their catechism, at stated times, under an able master. But this able master was, I think, not elected before last February; and my visit happened, if I mistake not, in November. The children were shy when interrogated by a stranger. This may be true, but the same shyness I do not remember to have hindered them from answering other questions; and I wonder why children so much accustomed to new spectators should be eminently shy.

My opponent, in the first paragraph, calls the inference that I made from this negligence, a hasty conclusion: to the decency of this expression I had nothing to object: but as he grew hot in his career, his enthusiasm began to sparkle; and in the vehemence of his postscript, he charges my assertions, and my reasons for advancing them, with folly and malice. His argumentation being somewhat enthusiastical, I cannot fully comprehend, but it seems to stand thus: my insinuations are foolish or malicious,

since I know not one of the Governours of the Hospital; for he that knows not the Governours of the Hospital, must be very foolish or malicious.

He has, however, so much kindness for me, that he advises me to consult my safety when I talk of corporations. I know not what the most important corporation can do, becoming manhood, by which my safety is endangered. My reputation is safe, for I can prove the fact; my quiet is safe, for I meant well; and for any other safety, I am not used to be very solicitous.

I am always sorry when I see any being labouring in vain; and in return for the Journalist's attention to my safety, I will confess some compassion for his tumultuous resentment; since all his invectives fume into the air, with so little effect upon me, that I still esteem him as one that has the *merit of meaning well;* and still believe him to be *a man whose failings may be justly pardoned for his virtues**.

* And of such a man it is to be regretted that Dr. Johnson was, by whatever motive, induced to speak with acrimony; but it is probable that he took up the subject at first merely to give play to his fancy. This answer, however, to Mr. Hanway's letter, is, as Mr. Boswell has remarked, the only instance in the whole course of his life, when he condescended to oppose any hing that was written against him. C.

REVIEW

OF

AN ESSAY

ON THE

WRITINGS AND GENIUS OF POPE.*

THIS is a very curious and entertaining miscellany of critical remarks and literary history. Though the book promises nothing but observations on the writings of Pope, yet no opportunity is neglected of introducing the character of any other writer, or the mention of any performance or event in which learning is interested. From Pope, however, he always takes his hint, and to Pope he returns again from his digressions. The facts which he mentions, though they are seldom anecdotes in a rigorous sense, are often such as are very little known, and such as will delight more readers than naked criticism.

As he examines the works of this great poet in an order nearly chronological, he necessarily begins with his pastorals, which considered as representations of any kind of life, he very justly censures; for there is in them a mixture of Grecian and English, of ancient and modern, images. *Windsor* is coupled

* From the Literary Magazine, 1756.

with *Hybla*, and *Thames* with *Pactolus*. He then compares some passages which Pope has imitated or translated, with the imitation or version, and gives the preference to the originals, perhaps not always upon convincing arguments.

Theocritus makes his lover wish to be a bee, that he might creep among the leaves that form the chaplet of his mistress. Pope's enamoured swain longs to be made the captive bird that sings in his fair one's bower, that she might listen to his songs, and reward them with her kisses. The critick prefers the image of Theocritus as more wild, more delicate, and more uncommon.

It is natural for a lover to wish that he might be any thing that could come near to his lady. But we more naturally desire to be that which she fondles and caresses, than that which she would avoid, at least would neglect. The superiour delicacy of Theocritus I cannot discover, nor can indeed find, that either in the one or the other image there is any want of delicacy. Which of the two images was less common in the time of the poet who used it, for on that consideration the merit of novelty depends, I think it is now out of any critick's power to decide.

He remarks, I am afraid with too much justice, that there is not a single new thought in the pastorals; and with equal reason declares, that their chief beauty consists in their correct and musical versification, which has so influenced the English ear, as to render every moderate rhymer harmonious.

In his examination of the *Messiah*, he justly observes some deviations from the inspired author,

which weaken the imagery, and dispirit the expression.

On *Windsor Forest*, he declares, I think without proof, that descriptive poetry was by no means the excellence of Pope; he draws this inference from the few images introduced in this poem, which would not equally belong to any other place. He must enquire whether *Windsor-Forest* has in reality any thing peculiar.

The *Stag-chase* is not, he says, so full, so animated, and so circumstantiated as Somerville's. Barely to say, that one performance is not so good as another, is to criticise with little exactness. But Pope has directed that we should in every work regard the author's end. The *Stag-chase* is the main subject of Somerville, and might therefore be properly dilated into all its circumstances; in Pope it is only incidental, and was to be despatched in a few lines.

He makes a just observation, "that the description of the external beauties of nature is usually the first effort of a young genius, before he hath studied nature and passions. Some of Milton's most early as well as most exquisite pieces are his *Lycidas*, *l'Allegro*, and *Il Penseroso*, if we may except his ode on the Nativity of CHRIST, which is indeed prior in order of time, and in which a penetrating critick might have observed the seeds of that boundless imagination which was one day to produce the Paradise Lost."

Mentioning Thomson and other descriptive poets, he remarks, that writers fail in their copies for want

of acquaintance with originals, and justly ridicules those who think they can form just ideas of valleys, mountains, and rivers, in a garret of the Strand. For this reason I cannot regret with this author, that Pope laid aside his design of writing American pastorals; for as he must have painted scenes which he never saw, and manners which he never knew, his performance, though it might have been a pleasing amusement of fancy, would have exhibited no representation of nature or of life.

After the pastorals, the critick considers the lyrick poetry of Pope, and dwells longest on the ode on *St. Cecilia's day*, which he, like the rest of mankind, places next to that of Dryden, and not much below it. He remarks after Mr. Spence, that the first stanza is a perfect concert. The second he thinks a little flat; he justly commends the fourth, but without notice of the best line in that stanza or in the poem:

> Transported demi-gods stood round,
> And men grew heroes at the sound.

In the latter part of the ode he objects to the stanza of triumph:

> Thus song could reveal, &c.

as written in a measure ridiculous and burlesque, and justifies his answer by observing that Addison uses the same numbers in the scene of Rosamond, between Grideline and Sir Trusty:

> How unhappy is he, &c.

That the measure is the same in both passages must be confessed, and both poets perhaps chose

their numbers properly; for they both meant to express a kind of airy hilarity. The two passions of merriment and exultation are undoubtedly different; they are as different as a gambol and a triumph, but each is a species of joy; and poetical measures have not in any language been so far refined as to provide for the subdivisions of passion. They can only be adapted to general purposes; but the particular and minuter propriety must be sought only in the sentiment and language. Thus the numbers are the same in *Colin's Complaint*, and in the ballad of *Darby and Joan*, though in one sadness is represented, and in the other tranquillity; so the measure is the same of Pope's *Unfortunate Lady*, and the *Praise of Voiture*.

He observes very justly, that the odes both of Dryden and Pope conclude unsuitably and unnaturally with epigram.

He then spends a page upon Mr. Handel's musick to Dryden's ode, and speaks of him with that regard which he has generally obtained among the lovers of sound. He finds something amiss in the air "With ravished ears," but has overlooked or forgotten the grossest fault in that composition, which is that in this line:

Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries,

He has laid much stress upon the two latter words, which are merely words of connexion, and ought in musick to be considered as parenthetical.

From this ode is struck out a digression on the nature of odes, and the comparative excellence of the ancients and moderns. He mentions the chorus

which Pope wrote for the duke of Buckingham; and thence takes occasion to treat of the chorus of the ancients. He then comes to another ode, of "*The dying Christian to his Soul*," in which finding an apparent imitation of Flatman, he falls into a pleasing and learned speculation on the resembling passages to be found in different poets.

He mentions with great regard Pope's ode on *Solitude*, written when he was but twelve years old, but omits to mention the poem on *Silence*, composed, I think, as early, with much greater elegance of diction, musick of numbers, extent of observation, and force of thought. If he had happened to think on Baillet's chapter of *Enfans célèbres*, he might have made on this occasion a very entertaining dissertation on early excellence.

He comes next to the *Essay on Criticism*, the stupendous performance of a youth not yet twenty years old; and after having detailed the felicities of condition, to which he imagines Pope to have owed his wonderful prematurity of mind, he tells us that he is well informed this essay was first written in prose. There is nothing improbable in the report, nothing indeed but what is more likely than the contrary; yet I* cannot forbear to hint to this writer and all others, the danger and weakness of trusting too readily to information. Nothing but experience could evince the frequency of false in-

* In all the papers and criticisms Dr. Johnson wrote for the Literary Magazine, he frequently departs from the customary *we* of anonymous writers. This, with his inimitable style, soon pointed him out as the principal person concerned in that publication. C.

formation, or enable any man to conceive that so many groundless reports should be propagated as every man of eminence may hear of himself. Some men relate what they think as what they know; some men of confused memories and habitual inaccuracy ascribe to one man what belongs to another; and some talk on without thought or care. A few men are sufficient to broach falsehoods, which are afterwards innocently diffused by successive relaters.

He proceeds on examining passage after passage of this essay; but we must pass over all those criticisms to which we have not something to add or to object, or where this author does not differ from the general voice of mankind. We cannot agree with him in his censure of the comparison of a student advancing in science with a traveller passing the Alps, which is perhaps the best simile in our language; that in which the most exact resemblance is traced between things in appearance utterly unrelated to each other. That the last line conveys no new *idea*, is not true; it makes particular what was before general. Whether the description which he adds from another author be, as he says, more full and striking than that of Pope, is not to be enquired. Pope's description is relative, and can admit no greater length than is usually allowed to a simile, nor any other particulars than such as form the correspondence.

Unvaried rhymes, says this writer, highly disgust readers of a good ear. It is surely not the ear but the mind that is offended. The fault arising from the use of common rhymes is, that by reading the past

line the second may be guessed, and half the composition loses the grace of novelty.

On occasion of the mention of an alexandrine, the critick observes, that "the alexandrine may be thought a modern measure, but that *Robert of Gloucester's Wife* is an alexandrine, with the addition of two syllables; and that Sternhold and Hopkins translated the Psalms in the same measure of fourteen syllables, though they are printed otherwise."

This seems not to be accurately conceived or expressed: an alexandrine with the addition of two syllables, is no more an alexandrine than with the detraction of two syllables. Sternhold and Hopkins did generally write in the alternate measure of eight and six syllables; but Hopkins commonly rhymed the first and third, Sternhold only the second and fourth: so that Sternhold may be considered as writing couplets of long lines; but Hopkins wrote regular stanzas. From the practice of printing the long lines of fourteen syllables in two short lines, arose the licence of some of our poets, who, though professing to write in stanzas, neglected the rhymes of the first and third lines.

Pope has mentioned Petronius among the great names of criticism, as the remarker justly observes without any critical merit. It is to be suspected that Pope had never read his book, and mentioned him on the credit of two or three sentences which he had often seen quoted, imagining that where there was so much there must necessarily be more. Young men in haste to be renowned, too frequently talk of books which they have scarcely seen.

The revival of learning mentioned in this poem, affords an opportunity of mentioning the chief periods of literary history, of which this writer reckons five: that of Alexander, of Ptolemy Philadelphus, of Augustus, of Leo the Tenth, of Queen Anne.

These observations are concluded with a remark which deserves great attention: "In no polished nation, after criticism has been much studied, and the rules of writing established, has any very extraordinary book ever appeared."

The *Rape of the Lock* was always regarded by Pope as the highest production of his genius. On occasion of this work, the history of the comick heroick is given; and we are told that it descended from Fassoni to Boileau, from Boileau to Garth, and from Garth to Pope. Garth is mentioned perhaps with too much honour; but all are confessed to be inferior to Pope. There is in his remarks on this work no discovery of any latent beauty, nor any thing subtle or striking; he is indeed commonly right, but has discussed no difficult question.

The next pieces to be considered are the *Verses to the Memory of an unfortunate Lady*, the *Prologue to Cato*, and *Epilogue to Jane Shore*. The first piece he commends. On occasion of the second he digresses, according to his custom, into a learned dissertation on tragedies, and compares the English and French with the Greek stage. He justly censures Cato for want of action and of characters; but scarcely does justice to the sublimity of some speeches and the philosophical exactness in the sentiments.

"The simile of mount Atlas, and that of the Numidian traveller smothered in the sands, are indeed in character," says the critick, "but sufficiently obvious." The simile of the mountain is indeed common; but of that of the traveller I do not remember. That it is obvious is easy to say, and easy to deny. Many things are obvious when they are taught.

He proceeds to criticise the other works of Addison, till the epilogue calls his attention to Rowe, whose character he discusses in the same manner with sufficient freedom and sufficient candour.

The translation of the *Epistle of Sappho to Phaon* is next considered: but Sappho and Ovid are more the subjects of this disquisition than Pope. We shall therefore pass over it to a piece of more importance, the *Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard*, which may justly be regarded as one of the works on which the reputation of Pope will stand in future times.

The critick pursues Eloisa through all the changes of passion, produces the passages of her letters to which any allusion is made, and intersperses many agreeable particulars and incidental relations. There is not much profundity of criticism, because the beauties are sentiments of nature, which the learned and the ignorant feel alike. It is justly remarked by him, that the wish of Eloisa for the happy passage of Abelard into the other world, is formed according to the ideas of mystic devotion.

These are the pieces examined in this volume: whether the remaining part of the work will be one volume or more, perhaps the writer himself cannot yet

inform us*. This piece is, however, a complete work, so far as it goes; and the writer is of opinion that he has despatched the chief part of his task: for he ventures to remark, that the reputation of Pope as a poet, among posterity, will be principally founded on his *Windsor Forest, Rape of the Lock*, and *Eloisa to Abelard;* while the facts and characters alluded to in his late writings will be forgotten and unknown, and their poignancy and propriety little relished; for wit and satire are transitory and perishable, but nature and passion are eternal.

He has interspersed some passages of Pope's life, with which most readers will be pleased. When Pope was yet a child, his father, who had been a merchant in London, retired to Binfield. He was taught to read by an aunt; and learned to write without a master, by copying printed books. His father used to order him to make English verses, and would oblige him to correct and retouch them over and over, and at last could say, "These are good rhymes."

At eight years of age, he was committed to one Taverner, a priest, who taught him the rudiments of the Latin and Greek. At this time he met with Ogleby's Homer, which seized his attention: he fell next upon Sandys's Ovid, and remembered these two translations with pleasure to the end of his life.

About ten, being at school near Hyde-Park-corner, he was taken to the play-house, and was so struck with the splendour of the drama, that he formed a kind of

* The second volume of Dr. Warton's Essay was not published until the year 1782. C.

play out of Ogleby's Homer, intermixed with verses of his own. He persuaded the head-boys to act this piece, and Ajax was performed by his master's gardener. They were habited according to the pictures in Ogleby. At twelve he retired with his father to Windsor Forest, and formed himself by study in the best English poets.

In this extract it was thought convenient to dwell chiefly upon such observations as relate immediately to Pope, without deviating with the author into incidental enquiries. We intend to kindle, not to extinguish, curiosity, by this slight sketch of a work abounding with curious quotations and pleasing disquisitions. He must be much acquainted with literary history, both of remote and late times, who does not find in this essay many things which he did not know before: and if there be any too learned to be instructed in facts or opinions, he may yet properly read this book as a just specimen of literary moderation.

REVIEW

OF

A FREE ENQUIRY

INTO THE

NATURE AND ORIGIN OF EVIL.*

THIS is a treatise consisting of Six Letters upon a very difficult and important question, which I am afraid this author's endeavours will not free from the perplexity which has entangled the speculatists of all ages, and which must always continue while *we see* but *in part*. He calls it a *Free Enquiry*, and indeed his *freedom* is, I think, greater than his

* This "Enquiry," published in 1757, was the production of Soame Jenyns, Esq. who never forgave the author of the Review. It is painful to relate, that after he had suppressed his resentment during Dr. Johnson's life, he gave it vent in a petulant and illiberal mock-epitaph, which would not have deserved notice had it not been admitted into the edition of his works published by Mr. Cole. When this epitaph first appeared in the newspapers, Mr. Boswell answered it by another upon Mr. Jenyns, equal, at least, in illiberality.

This Review is justly reckoned one of the finest specimens of criticism in our language, and was read with such eagerness when published in the Literary Magazine, that the author was induced to reprint it in a small volume by itself; a circumstance which appears to have escaped Mr. Boswell's research. C.

modesty. Though he is far from the contemptible arrogance, or the impious licentiousness of Bolingbroke, yet he decides too easily upon questions out of the reach of human determination, with too little consideration of mortal weakness, and with too much vivacity for the necessary caution.

In the first letter *on Evil in general*, he observes, that, "it is the solution of this important question, *whence came Evil*, alone, that can ascertain the moral characteristick of God, without which there is an end of all distinction between Good and Evil." Yet he begins this Enquiry by this declaration: "That there is a Supreme Being, infinitely powerful, wise, and benevolent, the great Creator and Preserver of all things, is a truth so clearly demonstrated, that it shall be here taken for granted." What is this but to say, that we have already reason to grant the existence of those attributes of God, which the present Enquiry is designed to prove? The present Enquiry is then surely made to no purpose. The attributes, to the demonstration of which the solution of this great question is necessary, have been demonstrated without any solution, or by means of the solution of some former writer.

He rejects the Manichean system, but imputes to it an absurdity, from which, amidst all its absurdities, it seems to be free, and adopts the system of Mr. Pope. "That pain is no evil, if asserted with regard to the individuals who suffer it, is downright nonsense; but if considered as it affects the universal system, is an undoubted truth, and means

only that there is no more pain in it than what is necessary to the production of happiness. How many soever of these evils then force themselves into the creation, so long as the good preponderates, it is a work well worthy of infinite wisdom and benevolence; and notwithstanding the imperfections of its parts, the whole is most undoubtedly perfect." And in the former part of the Letter he gives the principle of his system in these words: "Omnipotence cannot work contradictions, it can only effect all possible things. But so little are we acquainted with the whole system of nature, that we know not what are possible, and what are not: but if we may judge from that constant mixture of pain with pleasure, and inconveniency with advantage, which we must observe in every thing round us, we have reason to conclude, that to endue created beings with perfection, that is, to produce Good exclusive of Evil, is one of those impossibilities which even infinite power cannot accomplish."

This is elegant and acute, but will by no means calm discontent, or silence curiosity; for whether Evil can be wholly separated from Good or not, it is plain that they may be mixed in various degrees, and as far as human eyes can judge, the degree of Evil might have been less without any impediment to Good.

The second Letter *on the evils of imperfection*, is little more than a paraphrase of Pope's Epistles, or yet less than a paraphrase, a mere translation of poetry into prose. This is surely to attack difficulty with very disproportionate abilities, to cut the Gordian knot with very blunt instruments. When

we are told of the insufficiency of former solutions, why is one of the latest, which no man can have forgotten, given us again? I am told, that this pamphlet is not the effort of hunger: what can it be then but the product of vanity? and yet how can vanity be gratified by plagiarism or transcription? When this speculatist finds himself prompted to another performance, let him consider whether he is about to disburthen his mind, or employ his fingers; and if I might venture to offer him a subject, I should wish that he would solve this question, Why he that has nothing to write, should desire to be a writer?

Yet is not this Letter without some sentiments, which, though not new, are of great importance, and may be read with pleasure in the thousandth repetition.

"Whatever we enjoy is purely a free gift from our Creator; but that we enjoy no more, can never sure be deemed an injury, or a just reason to question his infinite benevolence. All our happiness is owing to his goodness; but that it is no greater, is owing only to ourselves; that is, to our not having any inherent right to any happiness, or even to any existence at all. This is no more to be imputed to God, than the wants of a beggar to the person who has relieved him: that he had something, was owing to his benefactor; but that he had no more, only to his own original poverty."

Thus far he speaks what every man must approve, and what every wise man has said before him. He then gives us the system of subordination, not in-

vented, for it was known I think to the Arabian metaphysicians, but adopted by Pope; and from him borrowed by the diligent researches of this great investigator.

"No system can possibly be formed, even in imagination, without a subordination of parts. Every animal body must have different members subservient to each other; every picture must be composed of various colours, and of light and shade; all harmony must be formed of trebles, tenors, and basses; every beautiful and useful edifice must consist of higher and lower, more and less magnificent apartments. This is in the very essence of all created things, and therefore cannot be prevented by any means whatever, unless by not creating them at all."

These instances are used instead of Pope's *Oak* and *Weeds*, or *Jupiter* and his *Satellites;* but neither Pope, nor this writer, have much contributed to solve the difficulty. Perfection or imperfection of unconscious beings has no meaning as referred to themselves; the *bass* and the *treble* are equally perfect; the mean and magnificent apartments feel no pleasure or pain from the comparison. Pope might ask the *weed*, why it was less than the *oak*, but the *weed* would never ask the question for itself. The *bass* and *treble* differ only to the hearer, meanness and magnificence only to the inhabitant. There is no Evil but must inhere in a conscious being, or be referred to it; that is, Evil must be felt before it is Evil. Yet even on this subject many questions might be offered, which human understanding has not yet answered, and which the present haste of this extract will not suffer me to dilate.

He proceeds to a humble detail of Pope's opinion: "The universe is a system whose very essence consists in subordination; a scale of beings descending by insensible degrees from infinite perfection to absolute nothing; in which, though we may justly expect to find perfection in the whole, could we possibly comprehend it; yet would it be the highest absurdity to hope for it in all its parts, because the beauty and happiness of the whole depend altogether on the just inferiority of its parts, that is, on the comparative imperfections of the several beings of which it is composed."

"It would have been no more an instance of God's wisdom to have created no beings but of the highest and most perfect order, than it would be of a painter's art to cover his whole piece with one single colour, the most beautiful he could compose. Had he confined himself to such, nothing could have existed but demi-gods, or arch-angels, and then all inferior orders must have been void and uninhabited: but as it is surely more agreeable to infinite Benevolence, that all these should be filled up with beings capable of enjoying happiness themselves, and contributing to that of others, they must necessarily be filled with inferior beings, that is, with such as are less perfect, but from whose existence, notwithstanding that less perfection, more felicity upon the whole accrues to the universe, than if no such had been created. It is moreover highly probable, that there is such a connexion between all ranks and orders by subordinate degrees, that they mutually support each other's existence, and every one in its place is absolutely neces-

[redacted] towards sustaining the whole vast and magnificent fabrick.

"Our pretences for complaint could be of this only, that we are not so high in the scale of existence as our ignorant ambition may desire; a pretence which must eternally subsist; because, were we ever so much higher, there would be still room for infinite power to exalt us; and since no link in the chain can be broke, the same reason for disquiet must remain to those who succeed to that chasm, which must be occasioned by our preferment. A man can have no reason to repine that he is not an angel; nor a horse that he is not a man; much less, that in their several stations they possess not the faculties of another; for this would be an insufferable misfortune."

This doctrine of the regular subordination of beings, the scale of existence, and the chain of nature, I have often considered, but always left the enquiry in doubt and uncertainty.

That every being not infinite, compared with infinity, must be imperfect, is evident to intuition; that whatever is imperfect must have a certain line which it cannot pass, is equally certain. But the reason which determined this limit, and for which such being was suffered to advance thus far and no farther, we shall never be able to discern. Our discoveries tell us, the Creator has made beings of all orders, and that therefore one of them must be such as man. But this system seems to be established on a concession, which, if it be refused, cannot be extorted.

Every reason which can be brought to prove, that there are beings of every possible sort, will prove that

there is the greatest number possible of every sort of beings; but this with respect to man we know, if we know any thing, not to be true.

It does not appear even to the imagination, that of three orders of being, the first and the third receive any advantage from the imperfection of the second, or that indeed they may not equally exist, though the second had never been, or should cease to be; and why should that be concluded necessary, which cannot be proved even to be useful?

The scale of existence from infinity to nothing, cannot possibly have being. The highest being not infinite must be, as has been often observed, at an infinite distance below infinity. Cheyne, who, with the desire inherent in mathematicians to reduce every thing to mathematical images, considers all existence as a *cone*, allows that the basis is at an infinite distance from the body. And in this distance between finite and infinite, there will be room for ever for an infinite series of indefinable existence.

Between the lowest positive existence and nothing, wherever we suppose positive existence to cease, is another chasm infinitely deep; where there is room again for endless orders of subordinate nature, continued for ever and for ever, and yet infinitely superior to non-existence.

To these meditations humanity is unequal. But yet we may ask, not of our Maker, but of each other, since on the one side creation, wherever it stops, must stop infinitely below infinity, and on the other infinitely above nothing, what necessity there is that it should proceed so far either way, that beings so high

or so low should ever have existed? We may ask; but I believe no created wisdom can give an adequate answer.

Nor is this all. In the scale, wherever it begins or ends, are infinite vacuities. At whatever distance we suppose the next order of beings to be above man, there is room for an intermediate order of beings between them; and if for one order, then for infinite orders; since every thing that admits of more or less, and consequently all the parts of that which admits them, may be infinitely divided. So that, as far as we can judge, there may be room in the vacuity between any two steps of the scale, or between any two points of the cone of being, for infinite exertion of infinite power.

Thus it appears how little reason those who repose their reason upon the scale of being have to triumph over them who recur to any other expedient of solution, and what difficulties arise on every side to repress the rebellions of presumptuous decision. *Qui pauca considerat, facile pronunciat.* In our passage through the boundless ocean of disquisition we often take fogs for land, and after having long toiled to approach them, find, instead of repose and harbours, new storms of objection, and fluctuations of uncertainty.

We are next entertained with Pope's alleviations of those evils which we are doomed to suffer.

"Poverty, or the want of riches, is generally compensated by having more hopes, and fewer fears, by a greater share of health, and a more exquisite relish of the smallest enjoyments, than those who possess

them are usually blessed with. The want of taste and genius, with all the pleasures that arise from them, are commonly recompensed by a more useful kind of common sense, together with a wonderful delight, as well as success, in the busy pursuits of a scrambling world. The sufferings of the sick are greatly relieved by many trifling gratifications imperceptible to others, and sometimes almost repaid by the inconceivable transports occasioned by the return of health and vigour. Folly cannot be very grievous, because imperceptible; and I doubt not but there is some truth in that rant of a mad poet, that there is a pleasure in being mad, which none but madmen know. Ignorance, or the want of knowledge and literature, the appointed lot of all born to poverty, and the drudgeries of life, is the only opiate capable of infusing that insensibility which can enable them to endure the miseries of the one and the fatigues of the other. It is a cordial administered by the gracious hand of Providence; of which they ought never to be deprived by an ill-judged and improper education. It is the basis of all subordination, the support of society, and the privilege of individuals: and I have ever thought it a most remarkable instance of the divine wisdom, that whereas in all animals, whose individuals rise little above the rest of their species, knowledge is instinctive; in man, whose individuals are so widely different, it is acquired by education; by which means the prince and the labourer, the philosopher and the peasant, are in some measure fitted for their respective situations."

Much of these positions is perhaps true, and the

whole paragraph might well pass without censure, were not objections necessary to the establishment of knowledge. *Poverty* is very gently paraphrased by *want of riches*. In that sense almost every man may in his own opinion be poor. But there is another poverty, which is *want of competence*, of all that can soften the miseries of life, of all that can diversify attention, or delight imagination. There is yet another poverty, which is *want of necessaries*, a species of poverty which no care of the publick, no charity of particulars, can preserve many from feeling openly, and many secretly.

That hope and fear are inseparably or very frequently connected with poverty, and riches, my surveys of life have not informed me. The milder degrees of poverty are sometimes supported by hope, but the more severe often sink down in motionless despondence. Life must be seen before it can be known. This author and Pope perhaps never saw the miseries which they imagine thus easy to be borne. The poor indeed are insensible of many little vexations which sometimes embitter the possessions and pollute the enjoyments of the rich. They are not pained by casual incivility, or mortified by the mutilation of a compliment; but this happiness is like that of a malefactor, who ceases to feel the cords that bind him when the pincers are tearing his flesh.

That want of taste for one enjoyment is supplied by the pleasures of some other, may be fairly allowed. But the compensations of sickness I have never found near to equivalence, and the transports of recovery only prove the intenseness of the pain.

With folly no man is willing to confess himself very intimately acquainted, and therefore its pains and pleasures are kept secret. But what the author says of its happiness seems applicable only to fatuity, or gross dulness; for that inferiority of understanding which makes one man without any other reason the slave, or tool, or property of another, which makes him sometimes useless, and sometimes ridiculous, is often felt with very quick sensibility. On the happiness of madmen, as the case is not very frequent, it is not necessary to raise a disquisition, but I cannot forbear to observe, that I never yet knew disorders of mind increase felicity: every madman is either arrogant and irascible, or gloomy and suspicious, or possessed by some passion or notion destructive to his quiet. He has always discontent in his look, and malignity in his bosom. And, if he had the power of choice, he would soon repent who should resign his reason to secure his peace.

Concerning the portion of ignorance necessary to make the condition of the lower classes of mankind safe to the publick and tolerable to themselves, both morals and policy exact a nicer enquiry than will be very soon or very easily made. There is undoubtedly a degree of knowledge which will direct a man to refer all to Providence, and to acquiesce in the condition with which omniscient Goodness has determined to allot him; to consider this world as a phantom that must soon glide from before his eyes, and the distresses and vexations that encompass him, as dust scattered in his path, as a blast that chills him for a moment, and passes off for ever.

Such wisdom, arising from the comparison of a part with the whole of our existence, those that want it most cannot possibly obtain from philosophy; nor unless the method of education, and the general tenour of life are changed, will very easily receive it from religion. The bulk of mankind is not likely to be very wise or very good: and I know not whether there are not many states of life, in which all knowledge, less than the highest wisdom, will produce discontent and danger. I believe it may be sometimes found, that a *little learning* is to a poor man a *dangerous thing*. But such is the condition of humanity, that we easily see, or quickly feel the wrong, but cannot always distinguish the right. Whatever knowledge is superfluous, in irremediable poverty, is hurtful, but the difficulty is to determine when poverty is irremediable, and at what point superfluity begins. Gross ignorance every man has found equally dangerous with perverted knowledge. Men left wholly to their appetites and their instincts, with little sense of moral or religious obligation, and with very faint distinctions of right and wrong, can never be safely employed, or confidently trusted: they can be honest only by obstinacy, and diligent only by compulsion or caprice. Some instruction, therefore, is necessary, and much perhaps may be dangerous.

Though it should be granted that those who are *born to poverty and drudgery* should not be *deprived* by an *improper education* of the *opiate* of *ignorance;* even this concession will not be of much use to direct our practice, unless it be determined who are those that are *born to poverty*. To entail irreversible

poverty upon generation after generation, only because the ancestor happened to be poor, is in itself cruel, if not unjust, and is wholly contrary to the maxims of a commercial nation, which always suppose and promote a rotation of property, and offer every individual a chance of mending his condition by his diligence. Those who communicate literature to the son of a poor man, consider him as one not born to poverty, but to the necessity of deriving a better fortune from himself. In this attempt, as in others, many fail, and many succeed. Those that fail will feel their misery more acutely; but since poverty is now confessed to be such a calamity as cannot be borne without the opiate of insensibility, I hope the happiness of those whom education enables to escape from it, may turn the balance against that exacerbation which the others suffer.

I am always afraid of determining on the side of envy or cruelty. The privileges of education may sometimes be improperly bestowed, but I shall always fear to withhold them, lest I should be yielding to the suggestions of pride, while I persuade myself that I am following the maxims of policy; and under the appearance of salutary restraints, should be indulging the lust of dominion, and that malevolence which delights in seeing others depressed.

Pope's doctrine is at last exhibited in a comparison, which, like other proofs of the same kind, is better adapted to delight the fancy than convince the reason.

" Thus the universe resembles a large and well-regulated family, in which all the officers and servants,

and even the domestick animals are subservient to each other in a proper subordination: each enjoys the privileges and perquisites peculiar to his place, and at the same time contributes by that just subordination to the magnificence and happiness of the whole."

The magnificence of a house is of use or pleasure always to the master, and sometimes to the domesticks. But the magnificence of the universe adds nothing to the Supreme Being; for any part of its inhabitants with which human knowledge is acquainted, an universe much less spacious or splendid would have been sufficient; and of happiness it does not appear that any is communicated from the beings of a lower world to those of a higher.

The Enquiry after the cause of *natural Evil* is continued in the third Letter, in which, as in the former, there is mixture of borrowed truth, and native folly, of some notions just and trite, with others uncommon and ridiculous.

His opinion of the value and importance of happiness is certainly just, and I shall insert it, not that it will give any information to any reader, but it may serve to show how the most common notion may be swelled in sound, and diffused in bulk, till it shall perhaps astonish the author himself.

"Happiness is the only thing of real value in existence, neither riches, nor power, nor wisdom, nor learning, nor strength, nor beauty, nor virtue, nor religion, nor even life itself, being of any importance, but as they contribute to its production. All these are in themselves neither good nor evil: happiness alone is their great end, and they are desirable only as they tend to promote it."

Success produces confidence. After this discovery of the value of happiness, he proceeds, without any distrust of himself, to tell us what has been hid from all former enquirers.

" The true solution of this important question, so long and so vainly searched for by the philosophers of all ages and all countries, I take to be at last no more than this, that these real evils proceed from the same source as those imaginary ones of imperfection, before treated of, namely, from that subordination, without which no created system can subsist; all subordination implying imperfection, all imperfection Evil, and all Evil some kind of inconveniency or suffering: so that there must be particular inconveniencies and sufferings annexed to every particular rank of created beings by the circumstances of things, and their modes of existence.

" God indeed might have made us quite other creatures, and placed us in a world quite differently constituted; but then we had been no longer men, and whatever beings had occupied our stations in the universal system, they must have been liable to the same inconveniencies."

In all this there is nothing that can silence the enquiries of curiosity, or calm the perturbations of doubt. Whether subordination implies imperfection may be disputed. The means respecting themselves may be as perfect as the end. The weed as a weed is no less perfect than the oak as an oak. That *imperfection implies Evil, and Evil suffering*, is by no means evident. Imperfection may imply privative Evil, or the absence of some good, but this privation

produces no suffering, but by the help of knowledge. An infant at the breast is yet an imperfect man, but there is no reason for belief that he is unhappy by his immaturity, unless some positive pain be superadded.

When this author presumes to speak of the universe, I would advise him a little to distrust his own faculties, however large and comprehensive. Many words easily understood on common occasion, become uncertain and figurative when applied to the works of Omnipotence. Subordination in human affairs is well understood; but when it is attributed to the universal system, its meaning grows less certain, like the petty distinctions of locality, which are of good use upon our own globe, but have no meaning with regard to infinite space, in which nothing is *high* or *low*.

That if man, by exaltation to a higher nature, were exempted from the evils which he now suffers, some other being must suffer them; that if man were not man, some other being must be man, is a position arising from his established notion of the scale of being. A notion to which Pope has given some importance by adopting it, and of which I have therefore endeavoured to show the uncertainty and inconsistency. This scale of being I have demonstrated to be raised by presumptuous imagination, to rest on nothing at the bottom, to lean on nothing at the top, and to have vacuities from step to step through which any order of being may sink into nihility without any inconvenience, so far as we can judge, to the next rank above or below it. We are therefore little enlightened by a writer who tells us, that any being in the state

of man must suffer what man suffers, when the only question that requires to be resolved is, Why any being is in this state?

Of poverty and labour he gives just and elegant representations, which yet do not remove the difficulty of the first and fundamental question, though supposing the present state of man necessary, they may supply some motives to content.

"Poverty is what all could not possibly have been exempted from, not only by reason of the fluctuating nature of human possessions, but because the world could not subsist without it; for had all been rich, none could have submitted to the commands of another, or the necessary drudgeries of life; thence all governments must have been dissolved, arts neglected, and lands uncultivated, and so an universal penury have overwhelmed all, instead of now and then pinching a few. Hence, by the by, appears the great excellence of charity, by which men are enabled, by a particular distribution of the blessings and enjoyments of life, on proper occasions, to prevent that poverty which by a general one Omnipotence itself could never have prevented: so that, by inforcing this duty, God as it were demands our assistance to promote universal happiness, and to shut out misery at every door, where it strives to intrude itself.

"Labour, indeed, God might easily have excused us from, since at his command the earth would readily have poured forth all her treasures without our inconsiderable assistance: but if the severest labour cannot sufficiently subdue the malignity of human nature, what plots and machinations, what wars, ra-

pine, and devastation, what profligacy and licentiousness, must have been the consequences of universal idleness! so that labour ought only to be looked upon as a task kindly imposed upon us by our indulgent Creator, necessary to preserve our health, our safety, and our innocence."

I am afraid that *the latter end of his commonwealth forgets the beginning.* If God *could easily have excused us from labour*, I do not comprehend why *he could not possibly have exempted all from poverty.* For poverty, in its easier and more tolerable degree, is little more than necessity of labour; and in its more severe and deplorable state, little more than inability for labour. To be poor is to work for others, or to want the succour of others without work. And the same exuberant fertility which would make work unnecessary, might make poverty impossible.

Surely a man who seems not completely master of his own opinion, should have spoken more cautiously of Omnipotence, nor have presumed to say what it could perform, or what it could prevent. I am in doubt whether those who stand highest in *the scale of being* speak thus confidently of the dispensations of their Maker:

> For fools rush in, where angels fear to tread.

Of our inquietudes of mind his account is still less reasonable. "Whilst men are injured, they must be inflamed with anger; and whilst they see cruelties, they must be melted with pity; whilst they perceive danger, they must be sensible of fear." This is to give

a reason for all Evil, by showing that one Evil produces another. If there is danger there ought to be fear; but if fear is an Evil, why should there be danger? His vindication of pain is of the same kind: pain is useful to alarm us, that we may shun greater evils, but those greater evils must be presupposed, that the fitness of pain may appear.

Treating on death, he has expressed the known and true doctrine with sprightliness of fancy, and neatness of diction. I shall therefore insert it. There are truths which, as they are always necessary, do not grow stale by repetition.

"Death, the last and most dreadful of all Evils, is so far from being one, that it is the infallible cure for all others.

> To die, is landing on some silent shore,
> Where billows never beat, nor tempests roar.
> Ere well we feel the friendly stroke, 'tis o'er. GARTH

For, abstracted from the sickness and sufferings usually attending it, it is no more than the expiration of that term of life God was pleased to bestow on us, without any claim or merit on our part. But was it an Evil ever so great, it could not be remedied but by one much greater, which is by living for ever; by which means our wickedness, unrestrained by the prospect of a future state, would grow so insupportable, our sufferings so intolerable by perseverance, and our pleasures so tiresome by repetition, that no being in the universe could be so completely miserable as a species of immortal men. We have no reason, there-

fore, to look upon death as an Evil, or to fear it as a punishment, even without any supposition of a future life: but if we consider it as a passage to a more perfect state, or a remove only in an eternal succession of still-improving states (for which we have the strongest reasons) it will then appear a new favour from the divine munificence; and a man must be as absurd to repine at dying, as a traveller would be, who proposed to himself a delightful tour through various unknown countries, to lament that he cannot take up his residence at the first dirty inn which he baits at on the road.

"The instability of human life, or of the changes of its successive periods, of which we so frequently complain, are no more than the necessary progress of it to this necessary conclusion; and are so far from being Evils deserving these complaints, that they are the source of our greatest pleasures, as they are the source of all novelty, from which our greatest pleasures are ever derived. The continual succession of seasons in the human life, by daily presenting to us new scenes, render it agreeable, and like those of the year, afford us delights by their change, which the choicest of them could not give us by their continuance. In the spring of life, the gilding of the sunshine, the verdure of the fields, and the variegated paintings of the sky, are so exquisite in the eyes of infants at their first looking abroad into a new world, as nothing perhaps afterwards can equal. The heat and vigour of the succeeding summer of youth ripens for us new pleasures, the blooming maid, the nightly revel, and the jovial chace: the serene autumn of

complete manhood feasts us with the golden harvests of our worldly pursuits: nor is the hoary winter of old age destitute of its peculiar comforts and enjoyments, of which the recollection and relation of those past are perhaps none of the least; and at last death opens to us a new prospect, from whence we shall probably look back upon the diversions and occupations of this world with the same contempt we do now on our tops and hobbyhorses, and with the same surprise that they could ever so much entertain or engage us."

I would not willingly detract from the beauty of this paragraph; and in gratitude to him who has so well inculcated such important truths, I will venture to admonish him, since the chief comfort of the old is the recollection of the past, so to employ his time and his thoughts, that when the imbecility of age shall come upon him, he may be able to recreate its languors by the remembrance of hours spent, not in presumptuous decisions, but modest enquiries, not in dogmatical limitations of Omnipotence, but in humble acquiescence and fervent adoration. Old age will show him that much of the book now before us has no other use than to perplex the scrupulous, and to shake the weak, to encourage impious presumption or stimulate idle curiosity.

Having thus despatched the consideration of particular evils, he comes at last to a general reason for which *Evil* may be said to be *our Good*. He is of opinion that there is some inconceivable benefit in pain abstractedly considered; that pain however inflicted, or wherever felt, communicates some good to

the general system of being, and that every animal is some way or other the better for the pain of every other animal. This opinion he carries so far as to suppose that there passes some principle of union through all animal life, as attraction is communicated to all corporeal nature; and that the Evils suffered on this globe, may by some inconceivable means contribute to the felicity of the inhabitants of the remotest planet.

How the Origin of Evil is brought nearer to human conception by any *inconceivable* means, I am not able to discover. We believed that the present system of creation was right, though we could not explain the adaptation of one part to the other, or for the whole succession of causes and consequences. Where has this enquirer added to the little knowledge that we had before? He has told us of the benefits of Evil, which no man feels, and relations between distant parts of the universe, which he cannot himself conceive. There was enough in this question inconceivable before, and we have little advantage from a new inconceivable solution.

I do not mean to reproach this author for not knowing what is equally hidden from learning and from ignorance. The shame is to impose words for ideas upon ourselves or others. To imagine that we are going forward when we are only turning round. To think that there is any difference between him that gives no reason, and him that gives a reason, which by his own confession cannot be conceived.

But that he may not be thought to conceive

nothing but things inconceivable, he has at last thought on a way by which human sufferings may produce good effects. He imagines that as we have not only animals for food, but choose some for our diversion, the same privilege may be allowed to some beings above us, *who may deceive, torment, or destroy us for the ends only of their own pleasure or utility.* This he again finds impossible to be conceived, *but that impossibility lessens not the probability of the conjecture, which by analogy is so strongly confirmed.*

I cannot resist the temptation of contemplating this analogy, which, I think, he might have carried further, very much to the advantage of his argument. He might have shown that these *hunters, whose game is man,* have many sports analogous to our own. As we drown whelps and kittens, they amuse themselves now and then with sinking a ship, and stand round the fields of Blenheim or the walls of Prague, as we encircle a cock-pit. As we shoot a bird flying, they take a man in the midst of his business or pleasure, and knock him down with an apoplexy. Some of them, perhaps, are virtuosi, and delight in the operations of an asthma, as a human philosopher in the effects of the air-pump. To swell a man with a tympany is as good sport as to blow a frog. Many a merry bout have these frolick beings at the vicissitudes of an ague, and good sport it is to see a man tumble with an epilepsy, and revive and tumble again, and all this he knows not why. As they are wiser and more powerful than we, they have more exquisite diversions, for we have no way of procuring any sport so brisk and

so lasting, as the paroxysms of the gout and stone, which undoubtedly must make high mirth, especially if the play be a little diversified with the blunders and pranks of the blind and deaf. We know not how far their sphere of observation may extend. Perhaps now and then a merry being may place himself in such a situation as to enjoy at once all the varieties of an epidemical disease, or amuse his leisure with the tossings and contortions of every possible pain exhibited together.

One sport the merry malice of these beings has found means of enjoying, to which we have nothing equal or similar. They now and then catch a mortal proud of his parts, and flattered either by the submission of those who court his kindness, or the notice of those who suffer him to court theirs. A head thus prepared for the reception of false opinions, and the projection of vain designs, they easily fill with idle notions, till in time they make their plaything an author: their first diversion commonly begins with an ode or an epistle, then rises perhaps to a political irony, and is at last brought to its height, by a treatise of philosophy. Then begins the poor animal to entangle himself in sophisms, and flounder in absurdity, to talk confidently of the scale of being, and to give solutions which himself confesses impossible to be understood. Sometimes, however, it happens that their pleasure is without much mischief. The author feels no pain, but while they are wondering at the extravagance of his opinion, and pointing him out to one another as a new example of human folly, he is enjoying his own applause, and that of his companions, and perhaps is

elevated with the hope of standing at the head of a new sect.

Many of the books which now crowd the world, may be justly suspected to be written for the sake of some invisible order of beings, for surely they are of no use to any of the corporeal inhabitants of the world. Of the productions of the last bounteous year, how many can be said to serve any purpose of use or pleasure? The only end of writing is to enable the readers better to enjoy life, or better to endure it: and how will either of those be put more in our power by him who tells us that we are puppets, of which some creature not much wiser than ourselves manages the wires? That a set of beings unseen and unheard, are hovering about us, trying experiments upon our sensibility, putting us in agonies to see our limbs quiver, torturing us to madness, that they may laugh at our vagaries, sometimes obstructing the bile, that they may see how a man looks when he is yellow; sometimes breaking a traveller's bones, to try how he will get home; sometimes wasting a man to a skeleton, and sometimes killing him fat for the greater elegance of his hide.

This is an account of natural Evil, which though, like the rest, not quite new, is very entertaining, though I know not how much it may contribute to patience. The only reason why we should contemplate Evil is, that we may bear it better; and I am afraid nothing is much more placidly endured, for the sake of making others sport.

The first pages of the fourth Letter are such as incline me both to hope and wish that I shall find

nothing to blame in the succeeding part. He offers a criterion of action, on account of virtue and vice, for which I have often contended, and which must be embraced by all who are willing to know why they act, or why they forbear to give any reason of their conduct to themselves or others.

"In order to find out the true Origin of moral Evil, it will be necessary, in the first place, to enquire into its nature and essence; or what it is that constitutes one action evil, and another good. Various have been the opinions of various authors on this criterion of virtue; and this variety has rendered that doubtful, which must otherwise have been clear and manifest to the meanest capacity. Some indeed have denied that there is any such thing, because different ages and nations have entertained different sentiments concerning it: but this is just as reasonable as to assert, that there are neither sun, moon, nor stars, because astronomers have supported different systems of the motions and magnitudes of these celestial bodies. Some have placed it in conformity to truth, some to the fitness of things, and others to the will of God. But all this is merely superficial: they resolve us not why truth, or the fitness of things, are either eligible or obligatory, or why God should require us to act in one manner rather than another. The true reason of which can possibly be no other than this, because some actions produce happiness, and others misery: so that all moral Good and Evil are nothing more than the production of natural. This alone it is that makes truth preferable to falsehood, this that determines the fit-

ness of things, and this that induces God to command some actions, and forbid others. They who extol the truth, beauty, and harmony of virtue, exclusive of its consequences, deal but in pompous nonsense; and they who would persuade us, that Good and Evil are things indifferent, depending wholly on the will of God, do but confound the nature of things, as well as all our notions of God himself, by representing him capable of willing contradictions; that is, that we should be, and be happy, and at the same time that we should torment and destroy each other; for injuries cannot be made benefits, pain cannot be made pleasure, and consequently vice cannot be made virtue by any power whatever. It is the consequences, therefore, of all human actions that must stamp their value. So far as the general practice of any action tends to produce good, and introduce happiness into the world, so far we may pronounce it virtuous; so much Evil as it occasions, such is the degree of vice it contains. I say the general practice, because we must always remember, in judging by this rule, to apply it only to the general species of actions, and not to particular actions; for the infinite wisdom of God, desirous to set bounds to the destructive consequences which must otherwise have followed from the universal depravity of mankind, has so wonderfully contrived the nature of things, that our most vicious actions may sometimes accidentally and collaterally produce good. Thus, for instance, robbery may disperse useless hoards to the benefit of the publick; adultery may bring heirs and good humour too into many families, where they

would otherwise have been wanting; and murder free the world from tyrants and oppressors. Luxury maintains its thousands, and vanity its ten thousands. Superstition and arbitrary power contribute to the grandeur of many nations, and the liberties of others are preserved by the perpetual contentions of avarice, knavery, selfishness, and ambition; and thus the worst of vices, and the worst of men, are often compelled by Providence to serve the most beneficial purposes, contrary to their own malevolent tendencies and inclinations; and thus private vices become publick benefits, by the force only of accidental circumstances. But this impeaches not the truth of the criterion of virtue before mentioned, the only solid foundation on which any true system of ethicks can be built, the only plain, simple, and uniform rule by which we can pass any judgment on our actions; but by this we may be enabled, not only to determine which are Good, and which are Evil, but almost mathematically to demonstrate the proportion of virtue or vice which belongs to each, by comparing them with the degrees of happiness or misery which they occasion. But though the production of happiness is the essence of virtue, it is by no means the end; the great end is the probation of mankind, or the giving them an opportunity of exalting or degrading themselves in another state by their behaviour in the present. And thus indeed it answers two most important purposes; those are the conservation of our happiness, and the test of our obedience; or had not such a test seemed necessary to God's infinite wisdom, and productive of universal

good, he would never have permitted the happiness of men, even in this life, to have depended on so precarious a tenure, as their mutual good behaviour to each other. For it is observable, that he who best knows our formation, has trusted no one thing of importance to our reason or virtue: he trusts only to our appetites for the support of the individual, and the continuance of our species; to our vanity or compassion, for our bounty to others; and to our fears, for the preservation of ourselves; often to our vices for the support of government, and sometimes to our follies for the preservation of our religion. But since some test of our obedience was necessary, nothing sure could have been commanded for that end so fit and proper, and at the same time so useful, as the practice of virtue: nothing could have been so justly rewarded with happiness, as the production of happiness in conformity to the will of God. It is this conformity alone which adds merit to virtue, and constitutes the essential difference between morality and religion. Morality obliges men to live honestly and soberly, because such behaviour is most conducive to publick happiness, and consequently to their own; religion, to pursue the same course, because conformable to the will of their Creator. Morality induces them to embrace virtue from prudential considerations; religion from those of gratitude and obedience. Morality therefore, entirely abstracted from religion, can have nothing meritorious in it; it being but wisdom, prudence, or good œconomy, which like health, beauty, or riches, are rather obligations conferred upon us by

than merits in us towards him; for though we may be justly punished for injuring ourselves, we can claim no reward for self-preservation; as suicide deserves punishment and infamy, but a man deserves no reward or honours for not being guilty of it. This I take to be the meaning of all those passages in our Scriptures, in which works are represented to have no merit without faith; that is, not without believing in historical facts, in creeds, and articles; but without being done in pursuance of our belief in God, and in obedience to his commands. And now, having mentioned Scripture, I cannot omit observing that the Christian is the only religious or moral institution in the world, that ever set in a right light these two material points, the essence and the end of virtue, that ever founded the one in the production of happiness, that is, in universal benevolence, or, in their language, charity to all men; the other, in the probation of man, and his obedience to his Creator. Sublime and magnificent as was the plilosophy of the ancients, all their moral systems were deficient in these two important articles. They were all built on the sandy foundations of the innate beauty of virtue, or enthusiastick patriotism; and their great point in view was the contemptible reward of human glory; foundations which were by no means able to support the magnificent structures which they erected upon them; for the beauty of virtue, independent of its effects, is unmeaning nonsense; patriotism, which injures mankind in general for the sake of a particular country, is but a more extended selfishness, and really criminal: and all human glory

but a mean and ridiculous delusion. The whole affair then of religion and morality, the subject of so many thousand volumes, is, in short, no more than this: the Supreme Being, infinitely good, as well as powerful, desirous to diffuse happiness by all possible means, has created innumerable ranks and orders of beings, all subservient to each other by proper subordination. One of these is occupied by man, a creature endued with such a certain degree of knowledge, reason, and free-will, as is suitable to his situation, and placed for a time on this globe as in a school of probation and education. Here he has an opportunity given him of improving or debasing his nature, in such a manner as to render himself fit for a rank of higher perfection and happiness, or to degrade himself to a state of greater imperfection and misery; necessary indeed towards carrying on the business of the universe, but very grievous and burdensome to those individuals who, by their own misconduct, are obliged to submit to it. The test of this his behaviour, is doing good, that is, co-operating with his Creator, as far as his narrow sphere of action will permit, in the production of happiness. And thus the happiness and misery of a future state will be the just reward or punishment of promoting or preventing happiness in this. So artificially by this means is the nature of all human virtue and vice contrived, that their rewards and punishments are woven, as it were, in their very essence; their immediate effects give us a foretaste of their future, and their fruits in the present life are the proper samples of what they must unavoidably produce in another. We have reason given us to dis-

tinguish these consequences, and regulate our conduct; and, lest that should neglect its post, conscience also is appointed as an instinctive kind of monitor, perpetually to remind us both of our interest and our duty."

Si sic omnia dixisset! To this account of the essence of vice and virtue, it is only necessary to add, that the consequences of human actions being sometimes uncertain, and sometimes remote, it is not possible in many cases for most men, nor in all cases for any man to determine what actions will ultimately produce happiness, and therefore it was proper that *revelation* should lay down a rule to be followed invariably in opposition to appearances, and in every change of circumstances, by which we may be certain to promote the general felicity, and be set free from the dangerous temptation of *doing Evil that Good may come.*

Because it may easily happen, and in effect will happen very frequently, that our own private happiness may be promoted by an act injurious to others, when yet no man can be obliged by nature to prefer ultimately the happiness of others to his own; therefore, to the instructions of infinite wisdom it was necessary that infinite power should add penal sanctions. That every man to whom those instructions shall be imparted may know, that he can never ultimately injure himself by benefiting others, or ultimately by injuring others benefit himself; but that however the lot of the good and bad may be huddled together in the seeming confusion of our present state, the time shall undoubtedly come, when the most virtuous will be most happy.

I am sorry that the remaining part of this Letter is not equal to the first. The author has indeed engaged in a disquisition in which we need not wonder if he fails, in the solution of questions on which philosophers have employed their abilities from the earliest times,

And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.

He denies that man was created *perfect*, because the system requires subordination, and because the power of losing his perfection, of "rendering himself wicked and miserable, is the highest imperfection imaginable." Besides, the regular gradations of the scale of being required somewhere "such a creature as man with all his infirmities about him, and the total removal of those would be altering his nature, and when he became perfect he must cease to be man."

I have already spent some considerations on the *scale of being*, of which yet I am obliged to renew the mention whenever a new argument is made to rest upon it; and I must therefore again remark, that consequences cannot have greater certainty than the postulate from which they are drawn, and that no system can be more hypothetical than this, and perhaps no hypothesis more absurd.

He again deceives himself with respect to the perfection with which *man* is held to be originally vested. "That man came perfect, that is, endued with all possible perfection, out of the hands of his Creator, is a false notion, derived from the philosophers.—The universal system required subordination, and conse-

quently comparative imperfection." That *man was ever endued with all possible perfection*, that is, with all perfection of which the idea is not contradictory, or destructive of itself, is undoubtedly *false*. But it can hardly be called *a false notion*, because no man ever thought it, nor can it be derived from the *philosophers;* for without pretending to guess what philosophers he may mean, it is very safe to affirm, that no philosopher ever said it. Of those who now maintain that *man* was once perfect, who may very easily be found, let the author enquire whether *man* was ever omniscient, whether he was ever omnipotent, whether he ever had even the lower power of archangels or angels. Their answers will soon inform him, that the supposed perfection of *man* was not absolute, but respective, that he was perfect in a sense consistent enough with subordination, perfect, not as compared with different beings, but with himself in his present degeneracy; not perfect as an angel, but perfect as man.

From this perfection, whatever it was, he thinks it necessary that man should be debarred, because pain is necessary to the good of the universe; and the pain of one order of beings extending its salutary influence to innumerable orders above and below, it was necessary that man should suffer; but because it is not suitable to justice that pain should be inflicted on innocence, it was necessary that man should be criminal.

This is given as a satisfactory account of the Original of moral Evil, which amounts only to this, that God created beings whose guilt he foreknew, in order

that he might have proper objects of pain, because the pain of part is, no man knows how or why, necessary to the felicity of the whole.

The perfection which man once had, may be so easily conceived, that without any unusual strain of imagination we can figure its revival. All the duties to God or man that are neglected we may fancy performed; all the crimes that are committed we may conceive forborne. Man will then be restored to his moral perfections: and into what head can it enter, that by this change the universal system would be shaken, or the condition of any order of beings altered for the worse?

He comes in the fifth Letter to political, and in the sixth to religious Evils. Of political Evil, if we suppose the Origin of moral Evil discovered, the account is by no means difficult: polity being only the conduct of immoral men in publick affairs. The Evils of each particular kind of government are very clearly and elegantly displayed, and from their secondary causes very rationally deduced; but the first cause lies still in its ancient obscurity. There is in this Letter nothing new, nor any thing eminently instructive; one of his practical deductions, that "from government Evils cannot be eradicated, and their excess only can be prevented," has been always allowed; the question upon which all dissension arises is, when that excess begins, at what point men shall cease to bear, and attempt to remedy.

Another of his precepts, though not new, well deserves to be transcribed, because it cannot be too frequently impressed.

"What has here been said of their imperfections

and abuses, is by no means intended as a defence of them: every wise man ought to redress them to the utmost of his power; which can be effected by one method only; that is, by a reformation of manners: for as all political Evils derive their original from moral, these can never be removed, until those are first amended. He, therefore, who strictly adheres to virtue and sobriety in his conduct, and enforces them by his example, does more real service to a state, than he who displaces a minister, or dethrones a tyrant; this gives but a temporary relief, but that exterminates the cause of the disease. No immoral man then can possibly be a true patriot; and all those who profess outrageous zeal for the liberty and prosperity of their country, and at the same time infringe her laws, affront her religion, and debauch her people, are but despicable quacks, by fraud or ignorance increasing the disorders they pretend to remedy."

Of religion he has said nothing but what he has learned, or might have learned from the divines; that it is not universal, because it must be received upon conviction, and successively received by those whom conviction reached; that its evidences and sanctions are not irresistible, because it was intended to induce, not to compel; and that it is obscure, because we want faculties to comprehend it. What he means by his assertion, that it wants policy, I do not well understand; he does not mean to deny that a good christian will be a good governour, or a good subject; and he has before justly observed, that the good man only is a patriot.

Religion has been, he says, corrupted by the

wickedness of those to whom it was communicated, and has lost part of its efficacy by its connexion with temporal interest and human passion.

He justly observes, that from all this, no conclusion can be drawn against the divine original of Christianity, since the objections arise not from the nature of the revelation, but of him to whom it is communicated.

All this is known, and all this is true; but why, we have not yet discovered. Our author, if I understand him right, pursues the argument thus: the religion of man produces evils, because the morality of man is imperfect; his morality is imperfect, that he may be justly a subject of punishment: he is made subject to punishment because the pain of part is necessary to the happiness of the whole; pain is necessary to happiness no mortal can tell why or how.

Thus, after having clambered with great labour from one step of argumentation to another, instead of rising into the light of knowledge, we are devolved back into dark ignorance; and all our effort ends in belief, that for the Evils of life there is some good reason, and in confession, that the reason cannot be found. This is all that has been produced by the revival of Chrysippus's untractableness of matter, and the Arabian scale of existence. A system has been raised, which is so ready to fall to pieces of itself, that no great praise can be derived from its destruction. To object is always easy, and it has been well observed by a late writer, that *the hand which cannot build a hovel, may demolish a temple**.

* New Practice of Physick.

REVIEW

OF THE

HISTORY OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LONDON,

For improving of Natural Knowledge, from its first Rise. In which the most considerable Papers communicated to the Society, which have hitherto not been published, are inserted in their proper Order, as a Supplement to the Philosophical Transactions.

By THOMAS BIRCH, D. D.

SECRETARY TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY. 2 Vols. 4to.

THIS book might more properly have been intitled by the author a diary than a history, as it proceeds regularly from day to day so minutely as to number over the members present at each committee, and so slowly, that two large volumes contain only the transactions of the eleven first years from the institution of the Society.

I am yet far from intending to represent this work as useless. Many particularities are of importance to one man, though they appear trifling to another, and it is always more safe to admit copiousness than to affect brevity. Many informations will be afforded by this book to the biographer. I know not where else it can be found, but here and in Ward, that Cowley was doctor in physic. And whenever any other institution of the same kind shall be at-

tempted, the exact relation of the progress of the Royal Society may furnish precedents.

These volumes consist of an exact journal of the Society; of some papers delivered to them, which though registered and preserved, had been never printed; and of short memoirs of the more eminent members, inserted at the end of the year in which each died.

The original of the society is placed earlier in this history than in that of Dr. Sprat. Theodore Haak, a German of the Palatinate, in 1645, proposed to some inquisitive and learned men a weekly meeting for the cultivation of natural knowledge. The first Associates, whose names ought surely to be preserved, were Dr. Wilkins, Dr. Wallis, Dr. Goddard, Dr. Ent, Dr. Glisson, Dr. Merret, Mr. Foster of Gresham, and Mr. Haak. Sometime afterwards Wilkins, Wallis, and Goddard being removed to Oxford, carried on the same design there by stated meetings, and adopted into their society Dr. Ward, Dr. Bathurst, Dr. Petty, and Dr. Willis.

The Oxford Society coming to London in 1659 joined their friends, and augmented their number, and for some time met in Gresham-College. After the restoration their number was again increased, and on the 28th of November, 1660, a select party happening to retire for conversation to Mr. Rooke's apartment in Gresham-College, formed the first plan of a regular society. Here Dr. Sprat's history begins, and therefore from this period the proceedings are well known.*

* From the Literary Magazine, 1756.

REVIEW

OF THE

GENERAL HISTORY OF POLYBIUS,

IN FIVE BOOKS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK BY MR. HAMPTON.

THIS appears to be one of the books which will long do honour to the present age. It has been by some remarker observed, that no man ever grew immortal by a translation; and undoubtedly translations into the prose of a living language must be laid aside whenever the language changes, because the matter being always to be found in the original, contributes nothing to the preservation of the form superinduced by the translator. But such versions may last long, though they can scarcely last always; and there is reason to believe that this will grow in reputation while the English tongue continues in its present state.

The great difficulty of a translator is to preserve the native form of his language, and the unconstrained manner of an original writer. This Mr. Hampton seems to have attained in a degree of which there are few examples. His book has the dignity of antiquity, and the easy flow of a modern composition.

It were, perhaps, to be desired that he had illustrated with notes an author which must have many

difficulties to an English reader, and particularly that he had explained the ancient art of war; but these omissions may be easily supplied by an inferior hand from the antiquaries and commentators.

To note omissions where there is so much performed, would be invidious, and to commend is unnecessary where the excellence of the work may be more easily and effectually shown by exhibiting a specimen.*

REVIEW

OF

MISCELLANIES ON MORAL AND RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS,

IN PROSE AND VERSE.

BY ELIZABETH HARRISON.

THIS volume, though only one name appears upon the first page, has been produced by the contribution of many hands, and printed by the encouragement of a numerous subscription, both which favours seem to be deserved by the modesty and piety of her on whom they were bestowed.

The authors of the essays in prose seem generally to have imitated or tried to imitate the copiousness and luxuriance of Mrs. Rowe; this however is not all their praise, they have laboured to add to her brightness of imagery her purity of sentiments.

* From the Literary Magazine, 1756.

The poets have had Dr. Watts before their eyes, a writer who, if he stood not in the first class of genius, compensated that defect by a ready application of his powers to the promotion of piety. The attempt to employ the ornaments of romance in the decoration of religion was, I think, first made by Mr. Boyle's Martydom of Theodora, but Boyle's philosophical studies did not allow him time for the cultivation of stile, and the completion of the great design was reserved for Mrs. Rowe. Dr. Watts was one of the first who taught the dissenters to write and speak like other men, by shewing them that elegance might consist with piety. They would have both done honour to a better society, for they had that charity which might well make their failings forgotten, and with which the whole Christian world might wish for communion. They were pure from all the heresies of an age, to which every opinion is become a favourite that the universal church has hitherto detested.

This praise the general interest of mankind requires to be given to writers who please and do not corrupt, who instruct and do not weary. But to them all human eulogies are vain, whom I believe applauded by angels and numbered with the just.*

* From the Literary Magazine, 1756.—There are other Reviews of Books by Dr. Johnson in this Magazine, but, in general, very short, and consisting chiefly of a few introductory remarks, and an extract. That on Mrs. Harrison's Miscellanies may be accounted somewhat interesting from the notice of Dr. Watts.

ACCOUNT OF A BOOK

ENTITLED

AN HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL ENQUIRY

INTO THE EVIDENCE

Produced by the Earls of MORAY and MORTON against

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.*

With an Examination of the Rev. Dr. ROBERTSON's Dissertation, and Mr. HUME's History, with respect to that Evidence.†

WE live in an age in which there is much talk of independence, of private judgment, of liberty of thought, and liberty of press. Our clamorous praises of liberty sufficiently prove that we enjoy it; and if by liberty nothing else be meant, than security from the persecutions of power, it is so fully possessed by us, that little more is to be desired, except that one should talk of it less, and use it better.

But a social being can scarcely rise to complete independence; he that has any wants, which others can supply, must study the gratification of them whose assistance he expects; this is equally true, whether his wants be wants of nature or of vanity. The writers of the present time are not always candidates for preferment, nor often the hirelings of a

* Written by Mr. Tytler, of Edinburgh.

† Printed in the Gentleman's Magazine, October 1760.

patron. They profess to serve no interest, and speak with loud contempt of sycophants and slaves.

There is, however, a power, from whose influence neither they nor their predecessors have ever been free. Those who have set greatness at defiance, have yet been the slaves of fashion. When an opinion has once become popular, very few are willing to oppose it. Idleness is more willing to credit than enquire; cowardice is afraid of controversy, and vanity of answer; and he that writes merely for sale, is tempted to court purchasers by flattering the prejudices of the public.

It has now been fashionable for near half a century, to defame and vilify the house of Stuart, and to exalt and magnify the reign of Elizabeth. The Stuarts have found few apologists, for the dead cannot pay for praise; and who will, without reward, oppose the tide of popularity? Yet there remains still among us, not wholly extinguished, a zeal for truth, a desire of establishing right, in opposition to fashion. The author, whose work is now before us, has attempted a vindication of Mary of Scotland, whose name has for some years been generally resigned to infamy, and who has been considered as the murderer of her husband, and condemned by her own letters.

Of these letters, the author of this vindication confesses the importance to be such, that *if they be genuine, the queen was guilty; and if they be spurious, she was innocent.* He has, therefore, undertaken to prove them spurious, and divided his treatise into six parts.

In the *first* is contained the history of the letters,

from their discovery by the earl of Morton, their being produced against Queen Mary, and their several appearances in England before Queen Elizabeth and her commissioners, until they were finally delivered back again to the earl of Morton.

The *second* contains a short abstract of Mr. Goodall's arguments for proving the letters to be spurious and forged; and of Dr. Robertson and Mr. Hume's objections by way of answer to Mr. Goodall, with critical observations on these authors.

The *third* contains an examination of the arguments of Dr. Robertson and Mr. Hume, in support of the authenticity of the letters.

The *fourth* contains an examination of the confession of Nicholas Hubert, commonly called *French Paris*, with observations shewing the same to be a forgery.

The *fifth* contains a short recapitulation or summary of the arguments on both sides of the question. And,

The *last* is an historical collection of the direct or positive evidence still on record, tending to shew what part the earls of Murray and Morton, and secretary Lethington, had in the murder of the lord Darnley.

The author apologises for the length of this book, by observing, that it necessarily comprises a great number of particulars, which could not easily be contracted: the same plea may be made for the imperfection of our extract, which will naturally fall below the force of the book, because we can only select parts of that evidence, which owes its strength to its

concatenation, and which will be weakened whenever it is disjoined.

The account of the seizure of these controverted letters is thus given by the queen's enemies.

" That in the castell of Edinburgh thair was left be the Erle of Bothwell, before his fleeing away, and was send for be ane George Dalgleish, his servand, who was taken be the Erle of Mortoun, ane small gylt coffer, not fully ane fute lang, garnisht in sindrie places with the Roman letter F. under ane king's crowne; wharin were certane letteris and writings weel knawin, and be aithis to be affirmit to have been written with the Quene of Scottis awn hand to the Erle."

The papers in the box were said to be eight letters in French, some love sonnets in French also, and a promise of marriage by the Queen to Bothwell.

To the reality of these letters our author makes some considerable objections, from the nature of things; but as such arguments do not always convince, we will pass to the evidence of facts.

On June 15, 1567, the queen delivered herself to Morton, and his party, who imprisoned her.

June 20, 1567, Dalgleish was seized, and six days after was examined by Morton; his examination is still extant, and there is no mention of this fatal box.

Dec. 4, 1567, Murray's secret council published an act, in which is the first mention of these letters, and in which they are said to be *written and subscrivit with her awin hand.* Ten days after Murray's first parliament met, and passed an act, in which they

mention *previe letters written halelie* [wholly] *with her awin hand.* The difference between *written and subscribed,* and *wholly written,* gives the author just reason to suspect, first, a forgery, and then a variation of the forgery. It is indeed very remarkable, that the first account asserts more than the second, though the second contains all the truth; for the letters, whether *written* by the queen or not, were not *subscribed.* Had the second account differed from the first only by something added, the first might have contained truth, though not all the truth; but as the second corrects the first by diminution, the first cannot be cleared from falsehood.

In October 1568, these letters were shewn at York to Elizabeth's commissioners, by the agents of Murray, but not in their publick character as commissioners, but by way of private information, and were not therefore exposed to Mary's commissioners. Mary, however, hearing that some letters were intended to be produced against her, directed her commissioners to require them for her inspection, and, in the mean time, to declare them *false and feigned, forged and invented,* observing that there were many that could counterfeit her hand.

To counterfeit a name is easy, to counterfeit a hand through eight letters very difficult. But it does not appear that the letters were ever shewn to those who would desire to detect them; and to the English commissioners a rude and remote imitation might be sufficient, since they were not shewn as judicial proofs; and why they were not shewn as proofs, no other reason can be given than they must have then

been examined, and that examination would have detected the forgery.

These letters, thus timorously and suspiciously communicated, were all the evidence against Mary; for the servants of Bothwell, executed for the murder of the king, acquitted the queen at the hour of death. These letters were so necessary to Murray, that he alledges them as the reason of the queen's imprisonment, though he imprisoned her on the 16th, and pretended not to have intercepted the letters before the 20th of June.

Of these letters, on which the fate of princes and kingdoms was suspended, the authority should have been put out of doubt; yet that such letters were ever found, there is no witness but Morton, who accused the queen, and Crawfurd, a dependent on Lennox, another of her accusers. Dalgleish, the bearer, was hanged without any interrogatories concerning them; and Hulet, mentioned in them, though then in prison, was never called to authenticate them, nor was his confession produced against Mary till death had left him no power to disown it.

Elizabeth, indeed, was easily satisfied; she declared herself ready to receive the proofs against Mary, and absolutely refused Mary the liberty of confronting her accusers, and making her defence. Before such a judge, a very little proof would be sufficient. She gave the accusers of Mary leave to go to Scotland, and the box and letters were seen no more. They have been since lost, and the discovery, which comparison of writing might have made, is now no longer possible. Hume has, however, endeavoured to

palliate the conduct of Elizabeth, but *his account*, says our author, *is contradicted almost in every sentence by the records, which, it appears, he has himself perused.*

In the next part, the authenticity of the letters is examined; and it seems to be proved beyond contradiction, that the French letters, supposed to have been written by Mary, are translated from the Scotch copy, and, if originals, which it was so much the interest of such numbers to preserve, are wanting, it is much more likely that they never existed, than that they have been lost,

The arguments used by Dr. Robertson, to prove the genuineness of the letters, are next examined. Robertson makes use principally of what he calls the *internal evidence*, which, amounting at most to conjecture, is opposed by conjecture equally probable.

In examining the confession of Nicholas Hubert, or *French Paris*, this new apologist of Mary seems to gain ground upon her accuser. *Paris* is mentioned in the letters, as the bearer of them to Bothwell; when the rest of Bothwell's servants were executed, clearing the queen in the last moment, *Paris*, instead of suffering his trial with the rest at Edinburgh, was conveyed to St. Andrew's, where Murray was absolute, put into a dungeon of Murray's citadel, and two years after condemned by Murray himself nobody knew how. Several months after his death, a confession in his name, without the regular testifications, was sent to Cecil, at what exact time nobody can tell.

Of this confession, Lesly, bishop of Ross, openly

denied the genuineness, in a book printed at London, and suppressed by Elizabeth; and another historian of that time declares, that *Paris* died without any confession; and the confession itself was never shewn to Mary, or to Mary's commissioners. The author makes this reflection:—

"From the violent presumptions that arise from their carrying this poor ignorant stranger from Edinburgh, the ordinary seat of justice; their keeping him hid from all the world, in a remote dungeon, and not producing him with their other evidences, so as he might have been publickly questioned; the positive and direct testimony of the author of Crawfurd's manuscript, then living, and on the spot at the time; with the publick affirmation of the bishop of Ross at the time of *Paris's* death, that he had vindicated the queen with his dying breath; the behaviour of Murray, Morton, Buchanan, and even of Hay, the attester of this pretended confession, on that occasion; their close and reserved silence at the time when they must have had this confession of *Paris* in their pocket; and their publishing every other circumstance that could tend to blacken the queen, and yet omitting this confession, the only direct evidence of her supposed guilt; all this duly and dispassionately considered, I think one may safely conclude, that it was judged not fit to expose so soon to light this piece of evidence against the queen; which a cloud of witnesses, living, and present at *Paris's* execution, would surely have given clear testimony against, as a notorious imposture."

Mr. Hume, indeed, observes, "It is in vain at present to seek for improbabilities in Nicholas Hu-

bert's dying confession, and to magnify the smallest difficulties into a contradiction. It was certainly a *regular judicial* paper, given in regularly and judicially, and ought to have been canvassed at the time, if the persons, whom it concerned, had been assured of their innocence."—To which our author makes a reply, which cannot be shortened without weakening it:

"Upon what does this author ground his sentence? Upon two very plain reasons, *first*, That the confession was a judicial one, that is, taken in presence, or by authority of a judge. And *secondly*, That it was regularly and judicially given in; that must be understood during the time of the conferences before queen Elizabeth and her council, in presence of Mary's commissioners; at which time she ought to have canvassed it, says our author, if she knew her innocence.

"That it was not a judicial confession, is evident: the paper itself does not bear any such mark; nor does it mention that it was taken in presence of any person, or by any authority whatsoever; and, by comparing it with the judicial examinations of Dalgleish, Hay, and Hepburn, it is apparent, that it is destitute of every formality requisite in a judicial evidence. In what dark corner, then, this strange production was generated, our author may endeavour to find out, if he can.

"As to his second assertion, that it was regularly and judicially given in, and therefore ought to have been canvassed by Mary during the conferences, we have already seen that this likewise is not fact: the

conferences broke up in February 1569: Nicholas Hubert was not hanged till August thereafter, and his dying confession, as Mr. Hume calls it, is only dated the 10th of that month. How then can this gentleman gravely tell us, that this confession was judicially given in, and ought to have been at that very time canvassed by queen Mary, and her commissioners? Such positive assertions, apparently contrary to fact, are unworthy the character of an historian, and may very justly render his decision, with respect to evidences of a higher nature, very dubious. In answer then to Mr. Hume: As the queen's accusers did not choose to produce this material witness, *Paris*, whom they had alive, and in their hands, nor any declaration or confession from him at the critical and proper time for having it canvassed by the queen, I apprehend our author's conclusion may fairly be used against himself; that it is in vain at present to support the improbabilities and absurdities in a confession, taken in a clandestine way, nobody knows how; and produced after *Paris's* death, by nobody knows whom; and from every appearance destitute of every formality requisite and common to such sort of evidence: for these reasons, I am under no sort of hesitation to give sentence against Nicholas Hubert's confession, as a gross imposture and forgery."

The state of the evidence relating to the letters is this:

Morton affirms that they were taken in the hands of Dalgleish. The examination of Dalgleish is still extant, and he appears never to have been once interrogated concerning the letters.

Morton and Murray affirm that they were written by the queen's hand; they were carefully concealed from Mary and her commissioners, and were never collated by one man, who could desire to disprove them.

Several of the incidents mentioned in the letters are confirmed by the oath of Crawfurd, one of Lennox's defendants, and some of the incidents are so minute, as that they could scarcely be thought on by a forger. Crawfurd's testimony is not without suspicion. Whoever practises forgery, endeavours to make truth the vehicle of falsehood. Of a prince's life very minute incidents are known; and if any are too slight to be remarked, they may be safely feigned, for they are likewise too slight to be contradicted. But there are still more reasons for doubting the genuineness of these letters. They had no date of time or place, no seal, no direction, no superscription.

The only evidences that could prove their authenticity were Dalgleish and *Paris*, of which Dalgleish, at his trial, was never questioned about them; *Paris* was never publickly tried, though he was kept alive through the time of the conference.

The servants of Bothwell, who were put to death for the king's murder, cleared Mary with their last words.

The letters were first declared to be subscribed, and were then produced without subscription.

They were shewn during the conferences at York privately to the English commissioners, but were concealed from the commissioners of Mary.

Mary always solicited the perusal of these letters, and was always denied it.

She demanded to be heard in person by Elizabeth, before the nobles of England, and the ambassadors of other princes, and was refused.

When Mary persisted in demanding copies of the letters, her commissioners were dismissed with their box to Scotland, and the letters were seen no more.

The French letters, which for almost two centuries have been considered as originals, by the enemies of Mary's memory, are now discovered to be forgeries, and acknowledged to be translations, and perhaps French translations of a Latin translation. And the modern accusers of Mary are forced to infer from these letters, which now exist, that other letters existed formerly, which have been lost in spite of curiosity, malice, and interest.

The rest of this treatise is employed in an endeavour to prove, that Mary's accusers were the murderers of Darnley: through this enquiry it is not necessary to follow him; only let it be observed, that, if these letters were forged by them, they may easily be thought capable of other crimes. That the letters were forged, is now made so probable, that perhaps they will never more be cited as testimonies.

TALES OF IMAGINATION.

THE

VISION OF THEODORE,

THE

HERMIT OF TENERIFFE,

FOUND IN HIS CELL.*

SON of Perseverance, whoever thou art, whose curiosity has led thee hither, read and be wise. He that now calls upon thee is Theodore, the Hermit of Teneriffe, who in the fifty-seventh year of his retreat left this instruction to mankind, lest his solitary hours should be spent in vain.

I was once what thou art now, a groveller on the earth, and a gazer at the sky; I trafficked and heaped wealth together, I loved and was favoured, I wore the robe of honour and heard the musick of adulation: I was ambitious, and rose to greatness: I was unhappy, and retired. I sought for some time what I at length found here, a place where all real wants might be easily supplied, and where I might not be under the necessity of purchasing the assistance of men by the toleration of their follies. Here I saw fruits and herbs and water, and here determined to wait the

* Printed in the PRECEPTOR, 1748.

hand of death, which I hope, when at last it comes, will fall lightly upon me.

Forty-eight years had I now passed in forgetfulness of all mortal cares, and without any inclination to wander farther than the necessity of procuring sustenance required; but as I stood one day beholding the rock that overhangs my cell, I found in myself a desire to climb it; and when I was on its top, was in the same manner determined to scale the next, till by degrees I conceived a wish to view the summit of the mountain, at the foot of which I had so long resided. This motion of my thoughts I endeavoured to suppress, not because it appeared criminal, but because it was new; and all change not evidently for the better, alarms a mind taught by experience to distrust itself. I was often afraid that my heart was deceiving me, that my impatience of confinement arose from some earthly passion, and that my ardour to survey the works of nature was only a hidden longing to mingle once again in the scenes of life. I therefore endeavoured to settle my thoughts into their former state, but found their distraction every day greater. I was always reproaching myself with the want of happiness within my reach, and at last began to question whether it was not laziness rather than caution that restrained me from climbing to the summit of Teneriffe.

I rose therefore before the day, and began my journey up the steep of the mountain; but I had not advanced far, old as I was and burthened with provisions, when the day began to shine upon me; the declivities grew more precipitous, and the sand slided from beneath my feet; at last, fainting with

labour, I arrived at a small plain almost inclosed by rocks, and open only to the east. I sat down to rest awhile, in full persuasion, that when I had recovered my strength I should proceed on my design; but when once I had tasted ease, I found many reasons against disturbing it. The branches spread a shade over my head, and the gales of spring wafted odours to my bosom.

As I sat thus, forming alternately excuses for delay, and resolutions to go forward, an irresistible heaviness suddenly surprised me; I laid my head upon the bank, and resigned myself to sleep: when methought I heard the sound as of the flight of eagles, and a being of more than human dignity stood before me. While I was deliberating how to address him, he took me by the hand with an air of kindness, and asked me solemnly, but without severity, "Theodore, whither art thou going?" "I am climbing," answered I, "to the top of the mountain, to enjoy a more extensive prospect of the works of nature." "Attend first," said he, "to the prospect which this place affords, and what thou dost not understand I will explain. I am one of the benevolent beings who watch over the children of the dust, to preserve them from those evils which will not ultimately terminate in good, and which they do not, by their own faults, bring upon themselves. Look round therefore without fear: observe, contemplate, and be instructed."

Encouraged by this assurance, I looked and beheld a mountain higher than Teneriffe, to the summit of which the human eye could never reach: when I had tired myself with gazing upon its height, I

turned my eyes towards its foot, which I could easily discover, but was amazed to find it without foundation, and placed inconceivably in emptiness and darkness. Thus I stood terrified and confused; above were tracks inscrutable, and below was total vacuity. But my protector, with a voice of admonition, cried out, "Theodore, be not affrighted, but raise thy eyes again; the Mountain of Existence is before thee, survey it and be wise."

I then looked with more deliberate attention, and observed the bottom of the mountain to be of gentle rise, and overspread with flowers; the middle to be more steep, embarrassed with crags, and interrupted by precipices, over which hung branches loaded with fruits, and among which were scattered palaces and bowers. The tracts which my eye could reach nearest the top were generally barren; but there were among the clefts of the rocks a few hardy ever-greens, which though they did not give much pleasure to the sight or smell, yet seemed to cheer the labour and facilitate the steps of those who were clambering among them.

Then, beginning to examine more minutely the different parts, I observed at a great distance a multitude of both sexes issuing into view from the bottom of the mountain. Their first actions I could not accurately discern; but, as they every moment approached nearer, I found that they amused themselves with gathering flowers under the superintendence of a modest virgin in a white robe, who seemed not over solicitous to confine them to any settled pace or certain track; for she knew that the whole

ground was smooth and solid, and that they could not easily be hurt or bewildered. When, as it often happened, they plucked a thistle for a flower, Innocence, so was she called, would smile at the mistake. Happy, said I, are they who are under so gentle a government, and yet are safe. But I had no opportunity to dwell long on the consideration of their felicity; for I found that Innocence continued her attendance but a little way, and seemed to consider only the flowery bottom of the mountain as her proper province. Those whom she abandoned scarcely knew that they were left, before they perceived themselves in the hands of Education, a nymph more severe in her aspect, and imperious in her commands, who confined them to certain paths, in their opinion too narrow and too rough. These they were continually solicited to leave by Appetite, whom Education could never fright away, though she sometimes awed her to such timidity, that the effects of her presence were scarcely perceptible. Some went back to the first part of the mountain, and seemed desirous of continuing busied in plucking flowers, but were no longer guarded by Innocence; and such as Education could not force back, proceeded up the mountain by some miry road, in which they were seldom seen, and scarcely ever regarded.

As Education led her troop up the mountain, nothing was more observable than that she was frequently giving them cautions to beware of Habits; and was calling out to one or another at every step, that a Habit was ensnaring them; that they would be under the dominion of Habit before they per-

ceived their danger: and that those whom Habit should once subdue, had little hope of regaining their liberty.

Of this caution, so frequently repeated, I was very solicitous to know the reason, when my protector directed my regard to a troop of pygmies, which appeared to walk silently before those that were climbing the mountain, and each to smooth the way before her follower. I found that I had missed the notice of them before, both because they were so minute as not easily to be discerned, and because they grew every moment nearer in their colour to the objects with which they were surrounded. As the followers of Education did not appear to be sensible of the presence of these dangerous associates, or, ridiculing their diminutive size, did not think it possible that human beings should ever be brought into subjection by such feeble enemies, they generally heard her precepts of vigilance with wonder: and, when they thought her eye withdrawn, treated them with contempt. Nor could I myself think her cautions so necessary as her frequent inculcations seemed to suppose, till I observed that each of these petty beings held secretly a chain in her hand, with which she prepared to bind those whom she found within her power. Yet these Habits under the eye of Education went quietly forward, and seemed very little to increase in bulk or strength; for though they were always willing to join with Appetite, yet when Education kept them apart from her, they would very punctually obey command, and make the narrow roads in which they were confined easier and smoother.

It was observable, that their stature was never at a stand, but continually growing or decreasing, yet not always in the same proportions: nor could I forbear to express my admiration, when I saw in how much less time they generally gained than lost bulk. Though they grew slowly in the road of Education, it might however be perceived that they grew; but if they once deviated at the call of Appetite, their stature soon became gigantick; and their strength was such, that Education pointed out to her tribe many that were led in chains by them, whom she could never more rescue from their slavery. She pointed them out, but with little effect; for all her pupils appeared confident of their own superiority to the strongest Habit, and some seemed in secret to regret that they were hindered from following the triumph of Appetite.

It was the peculiar artifice of a Habit not to suffer her power to be felt at first. Those whom she led, she had the address of appearing only to attend, but was continually doubling her chains upon her companions; which were so slender in themselves, and so silently fastened, that while the attention was engaged by other objects, they were not easily perceived. Each link grew tighter as it had been longer worn; and when by continual additions they became so heavy as to be felt, they were very frequently too strong to be broken.

When Education had proceeded in this manner to the part of the mountain where the declivity began to grow craggy, she resigned her charge to two powers of superiour aspect. The meaner of them

appeared capable of presiding in senates, or governing nations, and yet watched the steps of the other with the most anxious attention, and was visibly confounded and perplexed if ever she suffered her regard to be drawn away. The other seemed to approve her submission as pleasing, but with such a condescension as plainly shewed that she claimed it as due; and indeed so great was her dignity and sweetness, that he who would not reverence, must not behold her.

"Theodore," said my protector, "be fearless, and be wise; approach these powers, whose dominion extends to all the remaining part of the Mountain of Existence." I trembled, and ventured to address the inferiour nymph, whose eyes, though piercing and awful, I was not able to sustain. "Bright Power," said I, "by whatever name it is lawful to address thee, tell me, thou who presidest here, on what condition thy protection will be granted?" "It will be granted," said she, "only to obedience. I am Reason, of all subordinate beings the noblest and the greatest; who, if thou wilt receive my laws, will reward thee like the rest of my votaries, by conducting thee to Religion." Charmed by her voice and aspect, I professed my readiness to follow her. She then presented me to her mistress, who looked upon me with tenderness. I bowed before her, and she smiled.

When Education delivered up those for whose happiness she had been so long solicitous, she seemed to expect that they should express some gratitude for her care, or some regret at the loss of that protection

which she had hitherto afforded them. But it was easy to discover, by the alacrity which broke out at her departure, that her presence had been long displeasing, and that she had been teaching those who felt in themselves no want of instruction. They all agreed in rejoicing that they should no longer be subject to her caprices, or disturbed by her documents, but should be now under the direction only of Reason, to whom they made no doubt of being able to recommend themselves by a steady adherence to all her precepts. Reason counselled them, at their first entrance upon her province, to inlist themselves among the votaries of Religion; and informed them, that if they trusted to her alone, they would find the same fate with her other admirers, whom she had not been able to secure against Appetites and Passions, and who, having been seized by Habits in the regions of Desire, had been dragged away to the caverns of Despair. Her admonition was vain, the greater number declared against any other direction, and doubted not but by her superintendency they should climb with safety up the Mountain of Existence. "My power," said Reason, "is to advise, not to compel; I have already told you the danger of your choice. The path seems now plain and even, but there are asperities and pitfalls, over which Religion only can conduct you. Look upwards, and you perceive a mist before you settled upon the highest visible part of the mountain; a mist by which my prospect is terminated, and which is pierced only by the eyes of Religion. Beyond it are the temples of Happiness, in which those who climb the precipice by her

direction, after the toil of their pilgrimage, repose for ever. I know not the way, and therefore can only conduct you to a better guide. Pride has sometimes reproached me with the narrowness of my view, but, when she endeavoured to extend it, could only shew me, below the mist, the bowers of Content; even they vanished as I fixed my eyes upon them; and those whom she persuaded to travel towards them were enchained by Habits, and ingulfed by Despair, a cruel tyrant, whose caverns are beyond the darkness on the right side and on the left, from whose prisons none can escape, and whom I cannot teach you to avoid."

Such was the declaration of Reason to those who demanded her protection. Some that recollected the dictates of Education, finding them now seconded by another authority, submitted with reluctance to the strict decree, and engaged themselves among the followers of Religion, who were distinguished by the uniformity of their march, though many of them were women, and by their continual endeavours to move upwards, without appearing to regard the prospects which at every step courted their attention.

All those who determined to follow either Reason or Religion, were continually importuned to forsake the road, sometimes by Passions, and sometimes by Appetites, of whom both had reason to boast the success of their artifices; for so many were drawn into by-paths, that any way was more populous than the right. The attacks of the Appetites were more impetuous, those of the Passions longer continued. The Appetites turned their followers directly from

the true way; but the Passions marched at first in a path nearly in the same direction with that of Reason and Religion, but deviated by slow degrees, till at last they entirely changed their course. Appetite drew aside the dull, and Passion the sprightly. Of the Appetites, Lust was the strongest; and of the Passions, Vanity. The most powerful assault was to be feared, when a Passion and an Appetite joined their enticements; and the path of Reason was best followed, when a Passion called to one side, and an Appetite to the other.

These seducers had the greatest success upon the followers of Reason, over whom they scarcely ever failed to prevail, except when they counteracted one another. They had not the same triumphs over the votaries of Religion; for though they were often led aside for a time, Religion commonly recalled them by her emissary Conscience, before Habit had time to enchain them. But they that professed to obey Reason, if once they forsook her, seldom returned; for she had no messenger to summon them but Pride, who generally betrayed her confidence, and employed all her skill to support Passion; and if ever she did her duty, was found unable to prevail, if Habit had interposed.

I soon found that the great danger to the followers of Religion was only from Habit; every other power was easily resisted, nor did they find any difficulty, when they inadvertently quitted her, to find her again by the direction of Conscience, unless they had given time to Habit to draw her chain behind them, and bar up the way by which they had wandered. Of

some of those, the condition was justly to be pitied, who turned at every call of Conscience, and tried, but without effect, to burst the chains of Habit; saw Religion walking forward at a distance, saw her with reverence, and longed to join her; but were, whenever they approached her, withheld by Habit, and languished in sordid bondage, which they could not escape, though they scorned and hated it.

It was evident that the Habits were so far from growing weaker by these repeated contests, that if they were not totally overcome, every struggle enlarged their bulk and increased their strength; and a Habit opposed and victorious was more than twice as strong as before the contest. The manner in which those who were weary of their tyranny endeavoured to escape from them, appeared by the event to be generally wrong; they tried to loose their chains one by one, and to retreat by the same degrees as they advanced; but before the deliverance was completed, Habit always threw new chains upon her fugitive; nor did any escape her but those who, by an effort sudden and violent, burst their shackles at once, and left her at a distance; and even of these, many rushing too precipitately forward, and hindered by their terrours from stopping where they were safe, were fatigued with their own vehemence, and resigned themselves again to that power from whom an escape must be so dearly bought, and whose tyranny was little felt, except when it was resisted.

Some however there always were, who when they found Habit prevailing over them, called upon Reason or Religion for assistance; each of them willingly

came to the succour of her suppliant, but neither with the same strength, nor the same success. Habit, insolent with her power, would often presume to parley with Reason, and offer to loose some of her chains if the rest might remain. To this Reason, who was never certain of victory, frequently consented, but always found her concession destructive, and saw the captive led away by Habit to his former slavery. Religion never submitted to treaty, but held out her hand with certainty of conquest; and if the captive to whom she gave it did not quit his hold, always led him away in triumph, and placed him in the direct path to the Temple of Happiness, where Reason never failed to congratulate his deliverance, and encourage his adherence to that power to whose timely succour he was indebted for it.

When the traveller was again placed in the road of Happiness, I saw Habit again gliding before him, but reduced to the stature of a dwarf, without strength and without activity; but when the Passions or Appetites, which had before seduced him, made their approach, Habit would on a sudden start into size, and with unexpected violence push him towards them. The wretch, thus impelled on one side, and allured on the other, too frequently quitted the road of Happiness, to which, after his second deviation from it, he rarely returned: but, by a timely call upon Religion, the force of Habit was eluded, her attacks grew fainter, and at last her correspondence with the enemy was entirely destroyed. She then began to employ those restless faculties in compliance with the power which she could not overcome; and as she grew again in

stature and in strength, cleared away the asperities of the Road to Happiness.

From this road I could not easily withdraw my attention, because all who travelled it appeared cheerful and satisfied; and the farther they proceeded, the greater appeared their alacrity, and the stronger their conviction of the wisdom of their guide. Some, who had never deviated but by short excursions, had Habit in the middle of their passage vigorously supporting them, and driving off their Appetites and Passions which attempted to interrupt their progress. Others, who had entered this road late, or had long forsaken it, were toiling on without her help at least, and commonly against her endeavours. But I observed, when they approached to the barren top, that few were able to proceed without some support from Habit: and that they, whose Habits were strong, advanced towards the mists with little emotion, and entered them at last with calmness and confidence; after which, they were seen only by the eye of Religion; and though Reason looked after them with the most earnest curiosity, she could only obtain a faint glimpse, when her mistress, to enlarge her prospect, raised her from the ground. Reason, however, discerned that they were safe, but Religion saw that they were happy.

"Now, Theodore," said my protector, "withdraw thy view from the regions of obscurity, and see the fate of those who, when they were dismissed by Education, would admit no direction but that of Reason. Survey their wanderings, and be wise."

I looked then upon the Road of Reason, which was indeed, so far as it reached, the same with that of

Religion, nor had Reason discovered it but by her instruction. Yet when she had once been taught it, she clearly saw that it was right; and Pride had sometimes incited her to declare that she discovered it herself, and persuaded her to offer herself as a guide to Religion: whom after many vain experiments she found it her highest privilege to follow. Reason was however at last well instructed in part of the way, and appeared to teach it with some success, when her precepts were not misrepresented by Passion, or her influence overborne by Appetite. But neither of these enemies was she able to resist. When Passion seized upon her votaries, she seldom attempted opposition: she seemed indeed to contend with more vigour against Appetite, but was generally overwearied in the contest; and if either of her opponents had confederated with Habit, her authority was wholly at an end. When Habit endeavoured to captivate the votaries of Religion, she grew by slow degrees, and gave time to escape; but in seizing the unhappy followers of Reason, she proceeded as one that had nothing to fear, and enlarged her size, and doubled her chains without intermission, and without reserve.

Of those who forsook the directions of Reason, some were led aside by the whispers of Ambition, who was perpetually pointing to stately palaces, situated on eminences on either side, recounting the delights of affluence, and boasting the security of power. They were easily persuaded to follow her, and Habit quickly threw her chains upon them; they were soon convinced of the folly of their choice, but few of them attempted to return. Ambition led them forward

from precipice to precipice, where many fell and were seen no more. Those that escaped were, after a long series of hazards, generally delivered over to Avarice, and enlisted by her in the service of Tyranny, where they continued to heap up gold till their patrons or their heirs pushed them headlong at last into the caverns of Despair.

Others were inticed by Intemperance to ramble in search of those fruits that hung over the rocks, and filled the air with their fragrance. I observed, that the Habits which hovered about these soon grew to an enormous size, nor were there any who less attempted to return to Reason, or sooner sunk into the gulfs that lay before them. When these first quitted the road, Reason looked after them with a frown of contempt, but had little expectations of being able to reclaim them; for the bowl of intoxication was of such qualities as to make them lose all regard but for the present moment; neither Hope nor Fear could enter their retreats; and Habit had so absolute a power, that even Conscience, if Religion had employed her in their favour, would not have been able to force an entrance.

There were others whose crime it was rather to neglect Reason than to disobey her; and who retreated from the heat and tumult of the way, not to the bowers of Intemperance, but to the maze of Indolence. They had this peculiarity in their condition, that they were always in sight of the Road of Reason, always wishing for her presence, and always resolving to return to-morrow. In these was most eminently conspicuous the subtlety of Habit,

who hung imperceptible shackles upon them, and was every moment leading them farther from the road, which they always imagined that they had the power of reaching. They wandered on from one double of the labyrinth to another with the chains of Habit hanging secretly upon them, till, as they advanced, the flowers grew paler, and the scents fainter; they proceeded in their dreary march without pleasure in their progress, yet without power to return; and had this aggravation above all others, that they were criminal but not delighted. The drunkard for a time laughed over his wine; the ambitious man triumphed in the miscarriage of his rival; but the captives of Indolence had neither superiority nor merriment. Discontent lowered in their looks, and Sadness hovered round their shades; yet they crawled on reluctant and gloomy, till they arrived at the depth of the recess, varied only with poppies and nightshade, where the dominion of Indolence terminates, and the hopeless wanderer is delivered up to Melancholy; the chains of Habit are rivetted for ever; and Melancholy, having tortured her prisoner for a time, consigns him at last to the cruelty of Despair.

While I was musing on this miserable scene, my protector called out to me, "Remember, Theodore, and be wise, and let not Habit prevail against thee." I started, and beheld myself surrounded by the rocks of Teneriffe: the birds of light were singing in the trees, and the glances of the morning darted upon me.

THE FOUNTAINS:

A FAIRY TALE.*

Felix qui potuit boni
Fontem visere lucidum. BOETHIUS.

As FLORETTA was wandering in a meadow at the foot of Plinlimmon, she heard a little bird cry in such a note as she had never observed before, and looking round her, saw a lovely goldfinch entangled by a lime-twig, and a hawk hovering over him, as at the point of seizing him in his talons.

Floretta longed to rescue the little bird, but was afraid to encounter the hawk, who looked fiercely upon her without any apparent dread of her approach, and as she advanced seemed to increase in bulk, and clapped his wings in token of defiance. Floretta stood deliberating a few moments, but, seeing her mother at no great distance, took courage, and snatched the twig with the little bird upon it. When she had disengaged him, she put him in her bosom, and the hawk flew away.

Floretta, showing her bird to her mother, told her from what danger she had rescued him: her mother, after admiring his beauty, said, that he

* From Miscellanies in Prose and Verse. By Anna Williams. 1766, 4to.

would be a very proper inhabitant of the little gilded cage, which had hung empty since the starling died for want of water, and that he should be placed at the chamber window, for it would be wonderfully pleasant to hear him in the morning.

Floretta, with tears in her eyes, replied, that he had better have been devoured by the hawk than die for want of water, and that she would not save him from a less evil to put him in danger of a greater: she therefore took him into her hand, cleaned his feathers from the bird-lime, looked upon him with great tenderness, and, having put his bill to her lips, dismissed him into the air.

He flew in circles round her as she went home, and, perching on a tree before the door, delighted them awhile with such sweetness of song, that her mother reproved her for not putting him in the cage. Floretta endeavoured to look grave, but silently approved her own act, and wished her mother more generosity. Her mother guessed her thoughts, and told her, that when she was older she would be wiser.

Floretta however did not repent, but hoped to hear her little bird the next morning singing at liberty. She waked early and listened, but no goldfinch could she hear. She rose, and walking again in the same meadow, went to view the bush where she had seen the lime-twig the day before.

When she entered the thicket, and was near the place for which she was looking, from behind a blossoming hawthorn advanced a female form of very low stature, but of elegant proportion and majestick

air, arrayed in all the colours of the meadow, and sparkling as she moved like a dew-drop in the sun.

Floretta was too much disordered to speak or fly, and stood motionless between fear and pleasure, when the little lady took her by the hand.

"I am," said she, "one of that order of beings which some call Fairies, and some Piskies: we have always been known to inhabit the crags and caverns of Plinlimmon. The maids and shepherds when they wander by moonlight, have often heard our musick, and sometimes seen our dances.

"I am the chief of the fairies of this region, and am known among them by the name of Lady Lilinet of the Blue Rock. As I lived always in my own mountain, I had very little knowledge of human manners, and thought better of mankind than other fairies found them to deserve; I therefore often opposed the mischievous practices of my sisters without always enquiring whether they were just. I extinguished the light that was kindled to lead a traveller into a marsh, and found afterwards that he was hasting to corrupt a virgin: I dissipated a mist which assumed the form of a town, and was raised to decoy a monopolizer of corn from his way to the next market: I removed a thorn, artfully planted to prick the foot of a churl, that was going to hinder the poor from following his reapers; and defeated so many schemes of obstruction and punishment, that I was cited before the Queen as one who favoured wickedness, and opposed the execution of fairy justice.

"Having never been accustomed to suffer controul, and thinking myself disgraced by the neces-

sity of defence, I so much irritated the Queen by my sullenness and petulance, that in her anger she transformed me into a goldfinch. 'In this form,' says she, 'I doom thee to remain till some human being shall show thee kindness without any prospect of interest.'

"I flew out of her presence not much dejected; for I did not doubt but every reasonable being must love that which having never offended, could not be hated, and having no power to hurt, could not be feared.

"I therefore fluttered about the villages, and endeavoured to force myself into notice.

"Having heard that nature was least corrupted among those who had no acquaintance with elegance and splendour, I employed myself for five years in hopping before the doors of cottages, and often sat singing on the thatched roof: my motions were seldom seen nor my notes heard, no kindness was ever excited, and all the reward of my officiousness was to be aimed at with a stone when I stood within a throw.

"The stones never hurt me, for I had still the power of a fairy.

"I then betook myself to spacious and magnificent habitations, and sung in bowers by the walks or on the banks of fountains.

"In these places where novelty was recommended by satiety, and curiosity excited by leisure, my form and my voice were soon distinguished, and I was known by the name of the pretty goldfinch: the inhabitants would walk out to listen to my musick, and

at last it was their practice to court my visits by scattering meat in my common haunts.

"This was repeated till I went about pecking in full security, and expected to regain my original form, when I observed two of my most liberal benefactors silently advancing with a net behind me. I flew off, and fluttering beside them pricked the leg of each, and left them halting and groaning with the cramp.

"I then went to another house, where for two springs and summers I entertained a splendid family with such melody as they had never heard in the woods before. The winter that followed the second summer was remarkably cold, and many little birds perished in the field. I laid myself in the way of one of the ladies as benumbed with cold and faint with hunger; she picked me up with great joy, telling her companions that she had found the goldfinch that sung so finely all summer in the myrtle hedge, that she would lay him where he should die, for she could not bear to kill him, and would then pick his fine feathers very carefully, and stick them in her muff.

"Finding that her fondness and her gratitude could give way to so slight an interest, I chilled her fingers that she could not hold me, then flew at her face, and with my beak gave her nose four pecks that left four black spots indelible behind them, and broke a match by which she would have obtained the finest equipage in the county.

"At length the Queen repented of her sentence, and being unable to revoke it, assisted me to try

experiments upon man, to excite his tenderness, and attract his regard.

"We made many attempts, in which we were always disappointed. At last she placed me in your way held by a lime-twig, and herself in the shape of a hawk made the show of devouring me. You, my dear, have rescued me from the seeming danger without desiring to detain me in captivity, or seeking any other recompence than the pleasure of benefiting a feeling creature.

"The Queen is so much pleased with your kindness, that I am come by her permission, to reward you with a greater favour than ever fairy bestowed before.

"The former gifts of fairies, though bounties in design, have proved commonly mischiefs in the event. We have granted mortals to wish according to their own discretion, and their discretion being small, and their wishes irreversible, they have rashly petitioned for their own destruction. But you, my dearest Floretta, shall have, what none have ever before obtained from us, the power of indulging your wish, and the liberty of retracting it. Be bold and follow me."

Floretta was easily persuaded to accompany the fairy, who led her through a labyrinth of crags and shrubs, to a cavern covered by a thicket on the side of the mountain.

"This cavern," said she, "is the court of Lilinet your friend; in this place you shall find a certain remedy for all real evils." Lilinet then went before her through a long subterraneous passage, where she saw many beautiful fairies, who came to gaze

at the stranger, but who, from reverence to their mistress, gave her no disturbance. She heard from remote corners of the gloomy cavern the roar of winds and the fall of waters, and more than once entreated to return; but Lilinet, assuring her that she was safe, persuaded her to proceed till they came to an arch, into which the light found its way through a fissure of the rock.

There Lilinet seated herself and her guest upon a bench of agate, and pointing to two fountains that bubbled before them, said, "Now attend, my dear Floretta, and enjoy the gratitude of a fairy. Observe the two fountains that spring up in the middle of the vault, one into a bason of alabaster, and the other into a bason of dark flint. The one is called the Spring of Joy, the other of Sorrow; they rise from distant veins in the rock, and burst out in two places, but after a short course unite their streams, and run ever after in one mingled current.

"By drinking of these fountains, which, though shut up from all other human beings, shall be always accessible to you, it will be in your power to regulate your future life.

"When you are drinking the water of joy from the alabaster fountain, you may form your wish, and it shall be granted. As you raise your wish higher, the water will be sweeter and sweeter to the taste; but beware that you are not tempted by its increasing sweetness to repeat your draughts, for the ill effects of your wish can only be removed by drinking the spring of sorrow from the bason of flint, which will be bitter in the same proportion as the water of

joy was sweet. Now, my Floretta, make the experiment, and give me the first proof of moderate desires. Take the golden cup that stands on the margin of the spring of joy, form your wish, and drink."

Floretta wanted no time to deliberate on the subject of her wish; her first desire was the increase of her beauty. She had some disproportion of features. She took the cup, and wished to be agreeable: the water was sweet, and she drank copiously; and in the fountain, which was clearer than crystal, she saw that her face was completely regular.

She then filled the cup again, and wished for a rosy bloom upon her cheeks: the water was sweeter than before, and the colour of her cheeks was heightened.

She next wished for a sparkling eye: the water grew yet more pleasant, and her glances were like the beams of the sun.

She could not yet stop; she drank again, desired to be made a perfect beauty, and a perfect beauty she became.

She had now whatever her heart could wish; and making an humble reverence to Lilinet, requested to be restored to her own habitation. They went back, and the fairies in the way wondered at the change of Floretta's form. She came home delighted to her mother, who, on seeing the improvement, was yet more delighted than herself.

Her mother from that time pushed her forward into public view: Floretta was at all the resorts of

idleness and assemblies of pleasure; she was fatigued with balls, she was cloyed with treats, she was exhausted by the necessity of returning compliments. This life delighted her a while, but custom soon destroyed its pleasure. She found that the men who courted her to-day resigned her on the morrow to other flatterers, and that the women attacked her reputation by whispers and calumnies, till, without knowing how she had offended, she was shunned as infamous.

She knew that her reputation was destroyed by the envy of her beauty, and resolved to degrade herself from the dangerous pre-eminence. She went to the bush where she rescued the bird, and called for Lady Lilinet. Immediately Lilinet appeared, and discovered by Floretta's dejected look that she had drank too much from the alabaster fountain.

"Follow me," she cried, "my Floretta, and be wiser for the future."

They went to the fountains, and Floretta began to taste the waters of sorrow, which were so bitter that she withdrew more than once the cup from her mouth: at last she resolutely drank away the perfection of beauty, the sparkling eye, and rosy bloom, and left herself only agreeable.

She lived for some time with great content; but content is seldom lasting. She had a desire in a short time again to taste the waters of joy: she called for the conduct of Lilinet, and was led to the alabaster fountain, where she drank, and wished for a faithful lover.

After her return she was soon addressed by a young man, whom she thought worthy of her affection. He courted, and flattered, and promised; till at last she yielded up her heart. He then applied to her parents; and, finding her fortune less than he expected, contrived a quarrel, and deserted her.

Exasperated by her disappointment, she went in quest of Lilinet, and expostulated with her for the deceit which she had practised. Lilinet asked her with a smile, for what she had been wishing; and being told, made her this reply. "You are not, my dear, to wonder or complain: you may wish for yourself, but your wishes can have no effect upon another. You may become lovely by the efficacy of the fountain, but that you shall be loved is by no means a certain consequence; for you cannot confer upon another either discernment or fidelity: that happiness which you must derive from others, it is not in my power to regulate or bestow."

Floretta was for some time so dejected by this limitation of the fountain's power, that she thought it unworthy of another visit; but, being on some occasion thwarted by her mother's authority, she went to Lilinet, and drank at the alabaster fountain for a spirit to do her own way.

Lilinet saw that she drank immoderately, and admonished her of her danger; but *spirit* and *her own way* gave such sweetness to the water, that she could not prevail upon herself to forbear, till Lilinet, in pure compassion, snatched the cup out of her hand.

When she came home every thought was contempt, and every action was rebellion: she had drunk into herself a spirit to resist, but could not give her mother a disposition to yield; the old lady asserted her right to govern; and, though she was often foiled by the impetuosity of her daughter, she supplied by pertinacity what she wanted in violence; so that the house was in continual tumult by the pranks of the daughter and opposition of the mother.

In time, Floretta was convinced that spirit had only made her a capricious termagant, and that her own ways ended in errour, perplexity, and disgrace; she perceived that the vehemence of mind, which to a man may sometimes procure awe and obedience, produce to a woman nothing but detestation; she therefore went back, and by a large draught from the flinty fountain, though the water was very bitter, replaced herself under her mother's care, and quitted her spirit, and her own way.

Floretta's fortune was moderate, and her desires were not larger, till her mother took her to spend a summer at one of the places which wealth and idleness frequent, under pretence of drinking the waters. She was now no longer a perfect beauty, and therefore conversation in her presence took its course as in other company, opinions were freely told, and observations made without reserve. Here Floretta first learned the importance of money. When she saw a woman of mean air and empty talk draw the attention of the place, she always discovered upon enquiry that she had so many thousands to her fortune.

She soon perceived that where these golden god-

desses appeared, neither birth nor elegance, nor civility had any power of attraction, and every art of entertainment was devoted to them, and that the great and the wise courted their regard.

The desire after wealth was raised yet higher by her mother, who was always telling her how much neglect she suffered for want of fortune, and what distinctions, if she had but a fortune, her good qualities would obtain. Her narrative of the day was always, that Floretta walked in the morning, but was not spoken to because she had a small fortune, and that Floretta danced at the ball better than any of them, but nobody minded her for want of a fortune.

This want, in which all other wants appeared to be included, Floretta was resolved to endure no longer, and came home flattering her imagination in secret with the riches which she was now about to obtain.

On the day after her return she walked out alone to meet Lady Lilinet, and went with her to the fountain: riches did not taste so sweet as either beauty or spirit, and therefore she was not immoderate in her draught.

When they returned from the cavern, Lilinet gave her wand to a fairy that attended her, with an order to conduct Floretta to the Black Rock.

The way was not long, and they soon came to the mouth of a mine in which there was a hidden treasure, guarded by an earthy fairy deformed and shaggy, who opposed the entrance of Floretta till he recognized the wand of the Lady of the Mountain. Here Floretta saw vast heaps of gold and silver and

gems, gathered and reposited in former ages, and intrusted to the guard of the fairies of the earth. The little fairy delivered the orders of her mistress, and the surly sentinel promised to obey them.

Floretta, wearied with her walk, and pleased with her success, went home to rest, and when she waked in the morning, first opened her eyes upon a cabinet of jewels, and looking into her drawers and boxes, found them filled with gold.

Floretta was now as fine as the finest. She was the first to adopt any expensive fashion, to subscribe to any pompous entertainment, to encourage any foreign artist, or engage in any frolick of which the cost was to make the pleasure.

She was on a sudden the favourite of every place. Report made her wealth thrice greater than it really was, and wherever she came, all was attention, reverence, and obedience. The ladies who had formerly slighted her, or by whom she had been formerly caressed, gratified her pride by open flattery and private murmurs. She sometimes overheard them railing at upstarts, and wondering whence some people came, or how their expences were supplied. This incited her to heighten the splendour of her dress, to increase the number of her retinue, and to make such propositions of costly schemes, that her rivals were forced to desist from contest.

But she now began to find that the tricks which can be played with money will seldom bear to be repeated, that admiration is a short-lived passion, and that the pleasure of expence is gone when wonder and

envy are no more excited. She found that respect was an empty form, and that all those who crowded round her were drawn to her by vanity or interest.

It was, however, pleasant to be able on any terms to elevate and to mortify, to raise hopes and fears: and she would still have continued to be rich, had not the ambition of her mother contrived to marry her to a lord, whom she despised as ignorant, and abhorred as profligate. Her mother persisted in her importunity; and Floretta having now lost the spirit of resistance, had no other refuge than to divest herself of her fairy fortune.

She implored the assistance of Lilinet, who praised her resolution. She drank cheerfully from the flinty fountain, and found the waters not extremely bitter. When she returned she went to bed, and in the morning perceived that all her riches had been conveyed away she knew not how, except a few ornamental jewels, which Lilinet had ordered to be carried back as a reward for her dignity of mind.

She was now almost weary of visiting the fountain, and solaced herself with such amusements as every day happened to produce: at last there arose in her imagination a strong desire to become a Wit.

The pleasures with which this new character appeared to teem were so numerous and so great, that she was impatient to enjoy them, and, rising before the sun, hastened to the place where she knew that her fairy patroness was always to be found. Lilinet was willing to conduct her, but could now scarcely restrain her from leading the way but by telling her,

that, if she went first, the fairies of the cavern would refuse her passage.

They came in time to the fountain, and Floretta took the golden cup into her hand; she filled it and drank, and again she filled it, for wit was sweeter than riches, spirit, or beauty.

As she returned she felt new successions of imagery rise in her mind, and whatever her memory offered to her imagination, assumed a new form, and connected itself with things to which it seemed before to have no relation. All the appearances about her were changed, but the novelties exhibited were commonly defects. She now saw that almost every thing was wrong, without often seeing how it could be better; and frequently imputed to the imperfection of art those failures which were caused by the limitation of nature.

Wherever she went, she breathed nothing but censure and reformation. If she visited her friends, she quarrelled with the situation of their houses, the disposition of their gardens, the direction of their walks, and the termination of their views. It was vain to show her fine furniture, for she was always ready to tell how it might be finer, or to conduct her through spacious apartments, for her thoughts were full of nobler fabricks, of airy palaces and Hesperian gardens. She admired nothing, and praised but little.

Her conversation was generally thought uncivil. If she received flatteries, she seldom repaid them: for she set no value upon vulgar praise. She could not hear a long story without hurrying the speaker

on to the conclusion; and obstructed the mirth of her companions, for she rarely took notice of a good jest, and never laughed except when she was delighted.

This behaviour made her unwelcome wherever she went; nor did her speculation upon human manners much contribute to forward her reception. She now saw the disproportions between language and sentiment, between passion and exclamation; she discovered the defects of every action, and the uncertainty of every conclusion; she knew the malignity of friendship, the avarice of liberality, the anxiety of content, and the cowardice of temerity.

To see all this was pleasant, but the greatest of all pleasures was to show it. To laugh was something, but it was much more to make others laugh. As every deformity of character made a strong impression upon her, she could not always forbear to transmit it to others; as she hated false appearances, she thought it her duty to detect them, till, between wantonness and virtue, scarce any that she knew escaped without some wounds by the shafts of ridicule; not that her merriment was always she consequence of total contempt, for she often honoured virtue where she laughed at affectation.

For these practices, and who can wonder, the cry was raised against her from every quarter, and to hunt her down was generally determined. Every eye was watching for a fault, and every tongue was busy to supply its share of defamation. With the most unpolluted purity of mind, she was censured as too free of favours, because she was not afraid to talk with

men: with generous sensibility of every human excellence, she was thought cold or envious, because she could not scatter praise with undistinguishing profusion: with tenderness that agonized at real misery, she was charged with delight in the pain of others, when she would not condole with those whom she knew to counterfeit affliction. She derided false appearances of kindness and of pity, and was therefore avoided as an enemy to society. As she seldom commended or censured but with some limitations and exceptions, the world condemned her as indifferent to the good and bad; and because she was often doubtful where others were confident, she was charged with laxity of principles, while her days were distracted and her rest broken by niceties of honour and scruples of morality.

Report had now made her so formidable that all flattered and all shunned her. If a lover gave a ball to his mistress and her friends, it was stipulated that Floretta should not be invited. If she entered a publick room, the ladies courtsied, and shrunk away, for there was no such thing as speaking, but Floretta would find something to criticise. If a girl was more spritely than her aunt, she was threatened that in a little time she would be like Floretta. Visits were very diligently paid when Floretta was known not to be at home; and no mother trusted her daughter to herself without a caution, if she should meet Floretta, to leave the company as soon as she could.

With all this Floretta made sport at first, but in time grew weary of general hostility. She would have been content with a few friends, but no friend-

ship was durable; it was the fashion to desert her, and with the fashion what fidelity will contend? She could have easily amused herself in solitude, but that she thought it mean to quit the field to treachery and folly.

Persecution at length tired her constancy, and she implored Lilinet to rid her of her wit: Lilinet complied, and walked up the mountain, but was often forced to stop and wait for her follower. When they came to the flinty fountain, Floretta filled a small cup and slowly brought it to her lips, but the water was insupportably bitter. She just tasted it, and dashed it to the ground, diluted the bitterness at the fountain of alabaster, and resolved to keep her wit with all its consequences.

Being now a wit for life, she surveyed the various conditions of mankind with such superiority of sentiment, that she found few distinctions to be envied or desired, and therefore did not very soon make another visit to the fountain. At length being alarmed by sickness, she resolved to drink length of life from the golden cup. She returned elated and secure, for though the longevity acquired was indeterminate, she considered death as far distant, and therefore suffered it not to intrude upon her pleasures.

But length of life included not perpetual health. She felt herself continually decaying, and saw the world fading about her. The delights of her early days would delight no longer, and however widely she extended her view, no new pleasure could be found; her friends, her enemies, her admirers, her rivals dropped one by one into the grave, and with those who

succeeded them she had neither community of joys nor strife of competition.

By this time she began to doubt whether old age were not dangerous to virtue; whether pain would not produce peevishness, and peevishness impair benevolence. She thought that the spectacle of life might be too long continued, and the vices which were often seen might raise less abhorrence; that resolution might be sapped by time, and let that virtue sink, which in its firmest state it had not without difficulty supported; and that it was vain to delay the hour which must come at last, and might come at a time of less preparation and greater imbecility.

These thoughts led her to Lilinet, whom she accompanied to the flinty fountain; where, after a short combat with herself, she drank the bitter water. They walked back to the favourite bush pensive and silent; "And now, "said she," accept my thanks for the last benefit that Floretta can receive." Lady Lilinet dropped a tear, impressed upon her lips the final kiss, and resigned her, as she resigned herself, to the course of nature.

THE ADVENTURERS.

THE

ADVENTURER.*

NUMB. 34. SATURDAY, *March* 3, 1753.

Has toties optata exegit gloria pœnas. JUV.

Such fate pursues the votaries of praise.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR, Fleet Prison, Feb. 24.

To a benevolent disposition, every state of life will afford some opportunities of contributing to the welfare of mankind. Opulence and splendour are enabled to dispel the cloud of adversity, to dry up the tears of the widow and the orphan, and to increase the felicity of all around them: their example will animate virtue, and retard the progress of vice.

* Five of these papers, Nos. 39. 67. 74. 81. and 128 are now restored to this edition of Dr. Johnson's Works. They have hitherto been omitted, probably, owing to Sir John Hawkins having made use of some incorrect copy of the Adventurer from whence he selected what were written by Dr. Johnson. Mr. Boswell's account of this paper is in many respects erroneous. See BRITISH ESSAYISTS, Preface to the Adventurer, p. 30. 35.

C.

And even indigence and obscurity, though without power to confer happiness, may at least prevent misery, and apprize those who are blinded by their passions, that they are on the brink of irremediable calamity.

Pleased, therefore, with the thought of recovering others from that folly which has embittered my own days, I have presumed to address the ADVENTURER from the dreary mansions of wretchedness and despair, of which the gates are so wonderfully constructed, as to fly open for the reception of strangers, though they are impervious as a rock of adamant to such as are within them:

——— *Facilis descensus Averni;*
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis:
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor est. VIRG.

The gates of Hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way:
But to return and view the cheerful skies;
In this the task and mighty labour lies. DRYDEN.

Suffer me to acquaint you, Sir, that I have glittered at the ball, and sparkled in the circle; that I have had the happiness to be the unknown favourite of an unknown lady at the masquerade, have been the delight of tables of the first fashion, and envy of my brother beaux; and to descend a little lower, it is, I believe, still remembered, that Messrs. Velours and d'Espagne stand indebted for a great part of their present influence at Guildhall, to the ele-

gance of my shape, and the graceful freedom of my carriage.

—— Sed quæ præclara et prospera tanti,
Ut rebus lætis par sit mensura malorum! JUV.

See the wild purchase of the bold and vain,
Where every bliss is bought with equal pain!

As I entered into the world very young, with an elegant person and a large estate, it was not long before I disentangled myself from the shackles of religion; for I was determined to the pursuit of pleasure, which according to my notions consisted in the unrestrained and unlimited gratifications of every passion and every appetite; and as this could not be obtained under the frowns of a perpetual dictator, I considered religion as my enemy; and proceeding to treat her with contempt and derision, was not a little delighted, that the unfashionableness of her appearance, and the unanimated uniformity of her motions, afforded frequent opportunities for the sallies of my imagination.

Conceiving now that I was sufficiently qualified to laugh away scruples, I imparted my remarks to those among my female favourites, whose virtue I intended to attack; for I was well assured, that pride would be able to make but a weak defence, when religion was subverted; nor was my success below my expectation: the love of pleasure is too strongly implanted in the female breast, to suffer them scrupulously to examine the validity of arguments designed to weaken restraint; all are easily led to believe, that whatever thwarts their incli-

nation must be wrong: little more, therefore, was required, than by the addition of some circumstances, and the exaggeration of others, to make merriment supply the place of demonstration; nor was I so senseless as to offer arguments to such as could not attend to them, and with whom a repartee or catch would more effectually answer the same purpose. This being effected, there remained only "the dread of the world:" but Roxana soared too high, to think the opinion of others worthy her notice; Lætitia seemed to think of it only to declare, that "if all her hairs were worlds," she should reckon them "well lost for love;" and Pastorella fondly conceived, that she could dwell for ever by the side of a bubbling fountain, content with her swain and fleecy care; without considering that stillness and solitude can afford satisfaction only to innocence.

It is not the desire of new acquisitions, but the glory of conquests, that fires the soldier's breast; as indeed the town is seldom worth much, when it has suffered the devastations of a siege; so that though I did not openly declare the effects of my own prowess, which is forbidden by the laws of honour, it cannot be supposed that I was very solicitous to bury my reputation, or to hinder accidental discoveries. To have gained one victory, is an inducement to hazard a second engagement: and though the success of the general should be a reason for increasing the strength of the fortification, it becomes, with many, a pretence for an immediate surrender, under the notion that no power

is able to withstand so formidable an adversary; while others brave the danger, and think it mean to surrender, and dastardly to fly. Melissa, indeed, knew better; and though she could not boast the apathy, steadiness, and inflexibility of a Cato, wanted not the more prudent virtue of Scipio, and gained the victory by declining the contest.

You must not, however, imagine, that I was, during this state of abandoned libertinism, so fully convinced of the fitness of my own conduct, as to be free from uneasiness. I knew very well, that I might justly be deemed the pest of society, and that such proceedings must terminate in the destruction of my health and fortune; but to admit thoughts of this kind was to live upon the rack: I fled, therefore, to the regions of mirth and jollity, as they are called, and endeavoured with burgundy, and a continual rotation of company, to free myself from the pangs of reflection. From these orgies we frequently sallied forth in quest of adventures, to the no small terrour and consternation of all the sober stragglers that came in our way: and though we never injured, like our illustrious progenitors, the Mohocks, either life or limbs; yet we have in the midst of Covent Garden buried a tailor, who had been troublesome to some of our fine gentlemen, beneath a heap of cabbage-leaves and stalks, with this conceit,

Satia te caule quem semper cupisti.

Glut yourself with cabbage of which you have always been greedy.

There can be no reason for mentioning the com-

mon exploits of breaking windows and bruising the watch; unless it be to tell you of the device of producing before the justice broken lanthorns, which have been paid for an hundred times; or their appearances with patches on their heads, under pretence of being cut by the sword that was never drawn: nor need I say any thing of the more formidable attack of sturdy chairmen, armed with poles; by a slight stroke of which, the pride of Ned Revel's face was at once laid flat, and that effected in an instant, which its most mortal foe had for years assayed in vain. I shall pass over the accidents that attended attempts to scale windows, and endeavours to dislodge signs from their hooks: there are many "hair-breadth 'scapes," besides those in the "imminent deadly breach;" but the rake's life, though it be equally hazardous with that of the soldier, is neither accompanied with present honour nor with pleasing retrospect; such is, and such ought to be the difference, between the enemy and the preserver of his country.

Amidst such giddy and thoughtless extravagance, it will not seem strange, that I was often the dupe of coarse flattery. When Mons. L'Allonge assured me that I thrust quart over arm better than any man in England, what could I less than present him with a sword that cost me thirty pieces? I was bound for a hundred pounds for Tom Trippet, because he had declared that he would dance a minuet with any man in the three kingdoms except myself. But I often parted with money against my inclination, either because I wanted the resolution to refuse, or dreaded the appellation of a niggardly fellow; and I may be

truly said to have squandered my estate, without honour, without friends, and without pleasure. The last may, perhaps, appear strange to men unacquainted with the masquerade of life: I deceived others, and I endeavoured to deceive myself; and have worn the face of pleasantry and gaiety, while my heart suffered the most exquisite torture.

By the instigation and encouragement of my friends, I became at length ambitious of a seat in parliament; and accordingly set out for the town of Wallop in the west, where my arrival was welcomed by a thousand throats, and I was in three days sure of a majority: but after drinking out one hundred and fifty hogsheads of wine, and bribing two-thirds of the corporation twice over, I had the mortification to find that the borough had been before sold to Mr. Courtly.

In a life of this kind, my fortune, though considerable, was presently dissipated; and as the attraction grows more strong the nearer any body approaches the earth, when once a man begins to sink into poverty, he falls with velocity always increasing; every supply is purchased at a higher and higher price, and every office of kindness obtained with greater and greater difficulty. Having now acquainted you with my state of elevation, I shall, if you encourage the continuance of my correspondence, shew you by what steps I descended from a first floor in Pall Mall to my present habitation.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

MISARGYRUS.

NUMB. 39. TUESDAY, *March* 20, 1753.

—Οδυσεος φυλλοισι καλυψατο, τω δ' αρ Αθηνη
Υπνον επ' ομμασι χευ, ινα μιν παυσειε ταχιστα
Δυσπονεος καματοιο. HOM.

—Pallas pour'd sweet slumbers on his soul;
And balmy dreams, the gift of soft repose,
Calm'd all his pains, and banish'd all his woes.
POPE.

IF every day did not produce fresh instances of the ingratitude of mankind, we might, perhaps, be at a loss, why so liberal and impartial a benefactor as Sleep, should meet with so few historians or panegyrists. Writers are so totally absorbed by the business of the day, as never to turn their attention to that power, whose officious hand so seasonably suspends the burthen of life: and without whose interposition man would not be able to endure the fatigue of labour, however rewarded, or the struggle with opposition, however successful.

Night, though she divides to many the longest part of life, and to almost all the most innocent and happy, is yet unthankfully neglected, except by those who pervert her gifts.

The astronomers, indeed, expect her with impatience, and felicitate themselves upon her arrival; Fontenelle has not failed to celebrate her praises; and to chide the sun for hiding from his view the worlds, which he imagines to appear in every con-

stellation. Nor have the poets been always deficient in her praises: Milton has observed of the Night, that it is "the pleasant time, the cool, the silent."

These men may, indeed, well be expected to pay particular homage to Night; since they are indebted to her, not only for cessation of pain, but increase of pleasure; not only for slumber, but for knowledge. But the greater part of her avowed votaries are the sons of luxury; who appropriate to festivity the hours designed for rest; who consider the reign of pleasure as commencing when day begins to withdraw her busy multitudes, and ceases to dissipate attention by intrusive and unwelcome variety; who begin to awake to joy when the rest of the world sinks into insensibility; and revel in the soft affluence of flattering and artificial lights, which "more shadowy set off the face of things."

Without touching upon the fatal consequences of a custom, which, as Ramazzini observes, will be for ever condemned, and for ever retained; it may be observed, that however Sleep may be put off from time to time, yet the demand is of so importunate a nature, as not to remain long unsatisfied: and if, as some have done, we consider it as the tax of life, we cannot but observe it as a tax that must be paid, unless we could cease to be men; for Alexander declared, that nothing convinced him that he was not a divinity, but his not being able to live without sleep.

To live without sleep in our present fluctuating state, however desirable it might seem to the lady

in Clelia, can surely be the wish only of the young or the ignorant; to every one else, a perpetual vigil will appear to be a state of wretchedness, second only to that of the miserable beings, whom Swift has in his travels so elegantly described, as "supremely cursed with immortality."

Sleep is necessary to the happy to prevent satiety, and to endear life by a short absence; and to the miserable, to relieve them by intervals of quiet. Life is to most, such as could not be endured without frequent intermission of existence: Homer, therefore, has thought it an office worthy of the goddess of wisdom, to lay Ulysses asleep when landed on Phæacia.

It is related of Barretier, whose early advances in literature scarce any human mind has equalled, that he spent twelve hours of the four-and-twenty in sleep: yet this appears from the bad state of his health, and the shortness of his life, to have been too small a respite for a mind so vigorously and intensely employed: it is to be regretted, therefore, that he did not exercise his mind less, and his body more: since by this means, it is highly probable, that though he would not then have astonished with the blaze of a comet, he would yet have shone with the permanent radiance of a fixed star.

Nor should it be objected, that there have been many men who daily spend fifteen or sixteen hours in study: for by some of whom this is reported it has never been done; others have done it for a short time only; and of the rest it appears, that they employed their minds in such operations as re-

quired neither celerity nor strength, in the low drudgery of collating copies, comparing authorities, digesting dictionaries, or accumulating compilations.

Men of study and imagination are frequently upbraided by the industrious and plodding sons of care, with passing too great a part of their life in a state of inaction. But these defiers of sleep seem not to remember that though it must be granted them that they are crawling about before the break of day, it can seldom be said that they are perfectly awake; they exhaust no spirits, and require no repairs; but lie torpid as a toad in marble, or at least are known to live only by an inert and sluggish loco-motive faculty, and may be said, like a wounded snake, to "drag their slow length along."

Man has been long known among philosophers by the appellation of the microcosm, or epitome of the world: the resemblance between the great and little world might, by a rational observer, be detailed to many particulars; and to many more by a fanciful speculatist. I know not in which of these two classes I shall be ranged for observing, that as the total quantity of light and darkness allotted in the course of the year to every region of the earth is the same, though distributed at various times and in different portions; so perhaps, to each individual of the human species, nature has ordained the same quantity of wakefulness and sleep; though divided by some into a total quiescence and vigorous exertion of their faculties, and blended by others in a kind of twilight

of existence, in a state between dreaming and reasoning, in which they either think without action, or act without thought.

The poets are generally well affected to sleep: as men who think with vigour, they require respite from thought; and gladly resign themselves to that gentle power, who not only bestows rest, but frequently leads them to happier regions, where patrons are always kind, and audiences are always candid, where they are feasted in the bowers of imagination, and crowned with flowers divested of their prickles, and laurels of unfading verdure.

The more refined and penetrating part of mankind, who take wide surveys of the wilds of life, who see the innumerable terrours and distresses that are perpetually preying on the heart of man, and discern with unhappy perspicuity, calamities yet latent in their causes, are glad to close their eyes upon the gloomy prospect, and lose in a short insensibility the remembrance of others miseries and their own. The hero has no higher hope, than that, after having routed legions after legions, and added kingdom to kingdom, he shall retire to milder happiness, and close his days in social festivity. The wit or the sage can expect no greater happiness, than that, after having harassed his reason in deep researches, and fatigued his fancy in boundless excursions, he shall sink at night in the tranquillity of sleep.

The poets, among all those that enjoy the blessings of sleep, have been least ashamed to acknowledge their benefactor. How much Statius considered the evils of life as assuaged and softened

by the balm of slumber, we may discover by that pathetic invocation, which he poured out in his waking nights: and that Cowley, among the other felicities of his darling solitude, did not forget to number the privilege of sleeping without disturbance, we may learn from the rank that he assigns among the gifts of nature to the poppy, "which is scattered," says he, "over the fields of corn, that all the needs of man may be easily satisfied, and that bread and sleep may be found together."

Si quis invisum Cereri benignæ
Me putat germen, vehementer errat;
Illa me in partem recipit libenter
Fertilis agri.

Meque frumentumque simul per omnes
Consulens mundo Dea spargit oras;
Crescite, O! dixit, duo magna sustenta-
cula vitæ.

Carpe, mortalis, mea dona lætus,
Carpe, nec plantas alias require,
Sed satur panis, satur et soporis,
Cætera sperne.

He wildly errs who thinks I yield
Precedence in the well-cloth'd field,
Tho' mix'd with wheat I grow:
Indulgent Ceres knew my worth,
And to adorn the teeming earth,
She bade the Poppy blow.

Nor vainly gay the sight to please,
But blest with power mankind to ease,
The goddess saw me rise:
"Thrive with the life-supporting grain,"
She cry'd, "the solace of the swain,
The cordial of his eyes.

"Seize, happy mortal, seize the good,
My hand supplies thy sleep and food,
And makes thee truly blest:
With plenteous meals enjoy the day,
In slumbers pass the night away,
And leave to fate the rest." C. B.

Sleep, therefore, as the chief of all earthly blessings, is justly appropriated to industry and temperance; the refreshing rest, and the peaceful night, are the portion only of him who lies down weary with honest labour, and free from the fumes of indigested luxury; it is the just doom of laziness and gluttony, to be inactive without ease, and drowsy without tranquillity.

Sleep has been often mentioned as the image of death; "so like it," says Sir Thomas Brown, "that I dare not trust it without my prayers:" their resemblance is, indeed, apparent and striking; they both, when they seize the body, leave the soul at liberty; and wise is he that remembers of both, that they can be safe and happy only by virtue.

NUMB. 41. TUESDAY, *March* 27, 1753.

———Si mutabile pectus
Est tibi, consiliis, non curribus, utere nostris,
Dum potes, et solidis etiamnum sedibus adstus;
Dumque male optatos nondum premis inscius axes. OVID.

———Th' attempt forsake,
And not my chariot but my counsel take;
While yet securely on the earth you stand;
Nor touch the horses with too rash a hand. ADDISON.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR, Fleet, March 24.

I NOW send you the sequel of my story; which had not been so long delayed, if I could have brought myself to imagine, that any real impatience was felt for the fate of Misargyrus; who has travelled no unbeaten track to misery, and consequently can present the reader only with such incidents as occur in daily life.

You have seen me, Sir, in the zenith of my glory, not dispensing the kindly warmth of an all-cheering sun: but, like another Phaëton, scorching and blasting every thing round me. I shall proceed, therefore, to finish my career, and pass as rapidly as possible through the remaining vicissitudes of my life.

When I first began to be in want of money, I made no doubt of an immediate supply. The newspapers were perpetually offering directions to men, who seemed to have no other business than to gather heaps

of gold for those who place their supreme felicity in scattering it. I posted away, therefore, to one of these advertisers, who by his proposals seemed to deal in thousands: and was not a little chagrined to find, that this general benefactor would have nothing to do with any larger sum than thirty pounds, nor would venture that without a joint note from myself and a reputable housekeeper, or for a longer time than three months.

It was not yet so bad with me, as that I needed to solicit surety for thirty pounds: yet partly from the greediness that extravagance always produces, and partly from a desire of seeing the humour of a petty usurer, a character of which I had hitherto lived in ignorance, I condescended to listen to his terms. He proceeded to inform me of my great felicity in not falling into the hands of an extortioner; and assured me, that I should find him extremely moderate in his demands: he was not, indeed, certain that he could furnish me with the whole sum, for people were at this particular time extremely pressing and importunate for money: yet, as I had the appearance of a gentleman, he would try what he could do, and give me his answer in three days.

At the expiration of the time, I called upon him again; and was again informed of the great demand for money, and that, "money was money now:" he then advised me to be punctual in my payment, as that might induce him to befriend me hereafter; and delivered me the money, deducting at the rate of five and thirty *per cent.*, with another panegyrick upon his own moderation.

I will not tire you with the various practices of usurious oppression; but cannot omit my transaction with Squeeze on Tower-hill, who, finding me a young man of considerable expectations, employed an agent to persuade me to borrow five hundred pounds, to be refunded by an annual payment of twenty *per cent.* during the joint lives of his daughter Nancy Squeeze and myself. The negociator came prepared to inforce his proposal with all his art; but, finding that I caught his offer with the eagerness of necessity, he grew cold and languid; "he had mentioned it out of kindness; he would try to serve me: Mr. Squeeze was an honest man, but extremely cautious." In three days he came to tell me, that his endeavours had been ineffectual, Mr. Squeeze having no good opinion of my life; but that there was one expedient remaining: Mrs. Squeeze could influence her husband, and her good will might be gained by a compliment. I waited that afternoon on Mrs. Squeeze, and poured out before her the flatteries which usually gain access to rank and beauty: I did not then know, that there are places in which the only compliment is a bribe. Having yet credit with a jeweller, I afterwards procured a ring of thirty guineas, which I humbly presented, and was soon admitted to a treaty with Mr. Squeeze. He appeared peevish and backward, and my old friend whispered me, that he would never make a dry bargain: I therefore invited him to a tavern. Nine times we met on the affair; nine times I paid four pounds for the supper and claret; and nine guineas I gave the agent for good offices. I then obtained

the money, paying ten *per cent.* advance; and at the tenth meeting gave another supper, and disbursed fifteen pounds for the writings.

Others who stiled themselves brokers, would only trust their money upon goods: that I might, therefore, try every art of expensive folly, I took a house and furnished it. I amused myself with despoiling my moveables of their glossy appearance, for fear of alarming the lender with suspicions: and in this I succeeded so well, that he favoured me with one hundred and sixty pounds upon that which was rated at seven hundred. I then found that I was to maintain a guardian about me to prevent the goods from being broken or removed. This was, indeed, an unexpected tax; but it was too late to recede: and I comforted myself, that I might prevent a creditor, of whom I had some apprehensions, from seizing, by having a prior execution always in the house.

By such means I had so embarrassed myself, that my whole attention was engaged in contriving excuses, and raising small sums to quiet such as words would no longer mollify. It cost me eighty pounds in presents to Mr. Leech the attorney, for his forbearance of one hundred, which he solicited me to take when I had no need. I was perpetually harassed with importunate demands, and insulted by wretches, who a few months before would not have dared to raise their eyes from the dust before me. I lived in continual terrour, frighted by every noise at the door, and terrified at the approach of every step quicker than common. I never retired to rest without feeling the justness of the Spanish proverb, "Let

him who sleeps too much, borrow the pillow of a debtor:" my solicitude and vexation kept me long waking; and when I had closed my eyes, I was pursued or insulted by visionary bailiffs.

When I reflected upon the meanness of the shifts I had reduced myself to, I could not but curse the folly and extravagance that had overwhelmed me in a sea of troubles, from which it was highly improbable that I should ever emerge. I had some time lived in hopes of an estate, at the death of my uncle; but he disappointed me by marrying his housekeeper; and, catching an opportunity soon after of quarrelling with me, for settling twenty pounds a year upon a girl whom I had seduced, told me that he would take care to prevent his fortune from being squandered upon prostitutes.

Nothing now remained, but the chance of extricating myself by marriage; a scheme which, I flattered myself, nothing but my present distress would have made me think on with patience. I determined, therefore, to look out for a tender novice, with a large fortune, at her own disposal; and accordingly fixed my eyes upon Miss Biddy Simper. I had now paid her six or seven visits; and so fully convinced her of my being a gentleman and a rake, that I made no doubt that both her person and fortune would be soon mine.

At this critical time, Miss Gripe called upon me, in a chariot bought with my money, and loaded with trinkets that I had in my days of affluence lavished on her. Those days were now over; and there was little hope that they would ever return. She was

not able to withstand the temptation of ten pounds that Talon the bailiff offered her, but brought him into my apartment disguised in a livery; and taking my sword to the window, under pretence of admiring the workmanship, beckoned him to seize me.

Delay would have beeu expensive without use, as the debt was too considerable for payment or bail: I therefore suffered myself to be immediately conducted to jail.

Vestibulum ante ipsum primisque in faucibus Orci,
Luctus & ultrices posuêre cubilia curæ;
Pallentesque habitant morbi, tristisque senectus,
Et metus, et malesuada fames, et turpis egestas. VIRG.

Just in the gate and in the jaws of hell,
Revengeful cares and sullen sorrows dwell;
And pale diseases, and repining age;
Want, fear, and famine's unresisted rage. DRYDEN.

Confinement of any kind is dreadful; a prison is sometimes able to shock those, who endure it in a good cause: let your imagination, therefore, acquaint you with what I have not words to express, and conceive, if possible, the horrors of imprisonment attended with reproach and ignominy, of involuntary association with the refuse of mankind, with wretches who were befor too abandoned for society, but, being now freed from shame or fear, are hourly improving their vices by consorting with each other.

There are, however, a few, whom like myself imprisonment has rather mortified than hardened: with these only I converse; and of these you may perhaps hereafter receive some account from

Your humble servant, MISARGYRUS.

NUMB. 45. TUESDAY, *April* 10, 1753.*

Nulla fides regni sociis, omnisque potestas
Impatiens consortis erit. LUCAN.

No faith of partnership dominion owns:
Still discord hovers o'er divided thrones.

IT is well known, that many things appear plausible in speculation, which can never be reduced to practice; and that of the numberless projects that have flattered mankind with theoretical speciousness, few have served any other purpose than to show the ingenuity of their contrivers. A voyage to the moon, however romantick and absurd the scheme may now appear, since the properties of air have been better understood, seemed highly probable to many of the aspiring wits in the last century, who began to doat upon their glossy plumes, and fluttered with impatience for the hour of their departure:

——Pereant vestigia mille
Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis angula campum.

Hills, vales, and floods appear already crost;
And, ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost. POPE.

Among the fallacies which only experience can detect, there are some, of which scarcely experience itself can destroy the influence; some which, by a captivating show of indubitable certainty, are perpe-

* The first sketch of this paper may be seen in Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 178. C.

tually gaining upon the human mind; and which, though every trial ends in disappointment, obtain new credit as the sense of miscarriage wears gradually away, persuade us to try again what we have tried already, and expose us by the same failure to double vexation.

Of this tempting, this delusive kind, is the expectation of great performances by confederated strength. The speculatist, when he has carefully observed how much may be performed by a single hand, calculates by a very easy operation the force of thousands, and goes on accumulating power till resistance vanishes before it; then rejoices in the success of his new scheme, and wonders at the folly or idleness of former ages, who have lived in want of what might so readily be procured, and suffered themselves to be debarred from happiness by obstacles which one united effort would have so easily surmounted.

But this gigantick phantom of collective power vanishes at once into air and emptiness, at the first attempt to put it into action. The different apprehensions, the discordant passions, the jarring interests of men, will scarcely permit that many should unite in one undertaking.

Of a great and complicated design, some will never be brought to discern the end; and of the several means by which it may be accomplished, the choice will be a perpetual subject of debate, as every man is swayed in his determination by his own knowledge or convenience. In a long series of action some will languish with fatigue, and some be drawn off by present gratifications; some will loiter because

others labour, and some will cease to labour because others loiter: and if once they come within prospect of success and profit, some will be greedy and others envious; some will undertake more than they can perform, to enlarge their claims of advantage; some will perform less than they undertake, lest their labours should chiefly turn to the benefit of others.

The history of mankind informs us that a single power is very seldom broken by a confederacy. States of different interests, and aspects malevolent to each other, may be united for a time by common distress; and in the ardour of self-preservation fall unanimously upon an enemy, by whom they are all equally endangered. But if their first attack can be withstood, time will never fail to dissolve their union: success and miscarriage will be equally destructive: after the conquest of a province, they will quarrel in the division; after the loss of a battle, all will be endeavouring to secure themselves by abandoning the rest.

From the impossibility of confining numbers to the constant and uniform prosecution of a common interest, arises the difficulty of securing subjects against the encroachment of governours. Power is always gradually stealing away from the many to the few, because the few are more vigilant and consistent; it still contracts to a smaller number, till in time it centers in a single person.

Thus all the forms of governments instituted among mankind, perpetually tend towards monarchy; and power, however diffused through the whole community, is by negligence or corruption,

tion or distress, reposed at last in the chief magistrate.

"There never appear," says Swift, "more than five or six men of genius in an age; but if they were united, the world could not stand before them." It is happy, therefore, for mankind, that of this union there is no probability. As men take in a wider compass of intellectual survey, they are more likely to choose different objects of pursuit; as they see more ways to the same end, they will be less easily persuaded to travel together; as each is better qualified to form an independent scheme of private greatness, he will reject with greater obstinacy the project of another; as each is more able to distinguish himself as the head of a party, he will less readily be made a follower or an associate.

The reigning philosophy informs us, that the vast bodies which constitute the universe, are regulated in their progress through the ethereal spaces, by the perpetual agency of contrary forces; by one of which they are restrained from deserting their orbits, and losing themselves in the immensity of heaven; and held off by the other from rushing together, and clustering round their centre with everlasting cohesion.

The same contrariety of impulse may be perhaps discovered in the motions of men: we are formed for society, not for combination; we are equally unqualified to live in a close connexion with our fellow-beings, and in total separation from them; we are attracted towards each other by general sympathy, but kept back from contact by private interests.

Some philosophers have been foolish enough to imagine, that improvements might be made in the system of the universe, by a different arrangement of the orbs of heaven; and politicians, equally ignorant and equally presumptuous, may easily be led to suppose, that the happiness of our world would be promoted by a different tendency of the human mind. It appears, indeed, to a slight and superficial observer, that many things impracticable in our present state, might be easily effected, if mankind were better disposed to union and co-operation: but a little reflection will discover, that if confederacies were easily formed, they would lose their efficacy, since numbers would be opposed to numbers, and unanimity to unanimity; and instead of the present petty competitions of individuals or single families, multitudes would be supplanting multitudes, and thousands plotting against thousands.

There is no class of the human species, of which the union seems to have been more expected, than of the learned: the rest of the world have almost always agreed to shut scholars up together in colleges and cloisters; surely not without hope, that they would look for that happiness in concord, which they were debarred from finding in variety; and that such conjunctions of intellect would recompense the munificence of founders and patrons, by performances above the reach of any single mind.

But discord, who found means to roll her apple into the banqueting chamber of the goddesses, has had the address to scatter her laurels in the seminaries of learning. The friendship of students and

of beauties is for the most part equally sincere, and equally durable: as both depend for happiness on the regard of others, on that of which the value arises merely from comparison, they are both exposed to perpetual jealousies, and both incessantly employed in schemes to intercept the praises of each other.

I am, however, far from intending to inculcate that this confinement of the studious to studious companions, has been wholly without advantage to the publick: neighbourhood, where it does not conciliate friendship, incites competition; and he that would contentedly rest in a lower degree of excellence, where he had no rival to dread, will be urged by his impatience of inferiority to incessant endeavours after great attainments.

These stimulations of honest rivalry are, perhaps, the chief effects of academies and societies; for whatever be the bulk of their joint labours, every single piece is always the production of an individual, that owes nothing to his colleagues but the contagion of diligence, a resolution to write, because the rest are writing, and the scorn of obscurity while the rest are illustrious.

NUMB. 50. SATURDAY, *April* 28, 1753.

Quicunque turpi fraude semel innotuit,
Etiamsi verum dicit, amittit fidem. PHÆD.

The wretch that often has deceiv'd,
Though truth he speaks, is ne'er believ'd.

WHEN Aristotle was once asked, what a man could gain by uttering falsehoods? he replied, "Not to be credited when he shall tell the truth."

The character of a liar is at once so hateful and contemptible, that even of those who have lost their virtue it might be expected that from the violation of truth they should be restrained by their pride. Almost every other vice that disgraces human nature, may be kept in countenance by applause and association: the corrupter of virgin innocence sees himself envied by the men, and at least not detested by the women; the drunkard may easily unite with beings, devoted like himself to noisy merriments or silent insensibility, who will celebrate his victories over the novices of intemperance, boast themselves the companions of his prowess, and tell with rapture of the multitudes whom unsuccessful emulation has hurried to the grave: even the robber and the cut-throat have their followers, who admire their address and intrepidity, their stratagems of rapine, and their fidelity to the gang.

The liar, and only the liar, is invariably and uni-

versally despised, abandoned, and disowned: he has no domestick consolations, which he can oppose to the censure of mankind; he can retire to no fraternity, where his crimes may stand in the place of virtues; but is given up to the hisses of the multitude, without friend and without apologist. It is the peculiar condition of falsehood, to be equally detested by the good and bad: "The devils," says Sir Thomas Brown, "do not tell lies to one another; for truth is necessary to all societies: nor can the society of hell subsist without it."

It is natural to expect, that a crime thus generally detested should be generally avoided; at least, that none should expose himself to unabated and unpitied infamy, without an adequate temptation; and that to guilt so easily detected, and so severely punished, an adequate temptation would not readily be found.

Yet so it is, that in defiance of censure and contempt, truth is frequently violated; and scarcely the most vigilant and unremitted circumspection will secure him that mixes with mankind, from being hourly deceived by men of whom it can scarcely be imagined, that they mean any injury to him or profit to themselves: even where the subject of conversation could not have been expected to put the passions in motion, or to have excited either hope or fear, or zeal or malignity, sufficient to induce any man to put his reputation in hazard, however little he might value it, or to overpower the love of truth, however weak might be its influence.

The casuists have very diligently distinguished

lies into their several classes, according to their various degrees of malignity: but they have, I think, generally omitted that which is most common, and perhaps, not least mischievous; which, since the moralists have not given it a name, I shall distinguish as the *lie* of *vanity*.

To vanity may justly be imputed most of the falsehoods which every man perceives hourly playing upon his ear, and, perhaps, most of those that are propagated with success. To the lie of commerce, and the lie of malice, the motive is so apparent, that they are seldom negligently or implicitly received; suspicion is always watchful over the practices of interest; and whatever the hope of gain, or desire of mischief, can prompt one man to assert, another is by reasons equally cogent incited to refute. But vanity pleases herself with such slight gratifications, and looks forward to pleasure so remotely consequential, that her practices raise no alarm, and her stratagems are not easily discovered.

Vanity is, indeed, often suffered to pass unpursued by suspicion, because he that would watch her motions, can never be at rest: fraud and malice are bounded in their influence; some opportunity of time and place is necessary to their agency; but scarce any man is abstracted one moment from his vanity; and he, to whom truth affords no gratifications, is generally inclined to seek them in falsehoods.

It is remarked by Sir Kenelm Digby, "That every man has a desire to appear superiour to others, though it were only in having seen what they have

not seen." Such an accidental advantage, since it neither implies merit, nor confers dignity, one would think should not be desired so much as to be counterfeited: yet even this vanity, trifling as it is, produces innumerable narratives, all equally false; but more or less credible in proportion to the skill or confidence of the relater. How many may a man of diffusive conversation count among his acquaintances, whose lives have been signalized by numberless escapes; who never cross the river but in a storm, or take a journey into the country without more adventures than befel the knights-errant of ancient times in pathless forests or enchanted castles! How many must he know, to whom portents and prodigies are of daily occurrence; and for whom nature is hourly working wonders invisible to every other eye, only to supply them with subjects of conversation?

Others there are that amuse themselves with the dissemination of falsehood, at greater hazard of detection and disgrace; men marked out by some lucky planet for universal confidence and friendship, who have been consulted in every difficulty, intrusted with every secret, and summoned to every transaction: it is the supreme felicity of these men, to stun all companies with noisy information; to still doubt, and overbear opposition, with certain knowledge or authentick intelligence. A liar of this kind, with a strong memory or brisk imagination, is often the oracle of an obscure club, and, till time discovers his impostures, dictates to his hearers with uncontrouled authority; for if a publick ques-

tion be started, he was present at the debate; if a new fashion be mentioned, he was at court the first day of its appearance; if a new performance of literature draws the attention of the publick, he has patronized the author, and seen his work in manuscript; if a criminal of eminence be condemned to die, he often predicted his fate, and endeavoured his reformation: and who that lives at a distance from the scene of action, will dare to contradict a man, who reports from his own eyes and ears, and to whom all persons and affairs are thus intimately known?

This kind of falsehood is generally successful for a time, because it is practised at first with timidity and caution: but the prosperity of the liar is of short duration; the reception of one story is always an incitement to the forgery of another less probable; and he goes on to triumph over tacit credulity, till pride or reason rises up against him, and his companions will no longer endure to see him wiser than themselves.

It is apparent, that the inventors of all these fictions intend some exaltation of themselves, and are led off by the pursuit of honour from their attendance upon truth: their narratives always imply some consequence in favour of their courage, their sagacity, or their activity, their familiarity with the learned, or their reception among the great; they are always bribed by the present pleasure of seeing themselves superiour to those that surround them, and receiving the homage of silent attention and envious admiration.

But vanity is sometimes excited to fiction by less visible gratifications: the present age abounds with a race of liars who are content with the consciousness of falsehood, and whose pride is to deceive others without any gain or glory to themselves. Of this tribe it is the supreme pleasure to remark a lady in the playhouse or the park, and to publish, under the character of a man suddenly enamoured, an advertisement in the news of the next day, containing a minute description of her person and her dress. From this artifice, however, no other effect can be expected, than perturbations which the writer can never see, and conjectures of which he never can be informed; some mischief, however, he hopes he has done; and to have done mischief, is of some importance. He sets his invention to work again, and produces a narrative of a robbery or a murder, with all the circumstances of time and place accurately adjusted. This is a jest of greater effect and longer duration: if he fixes his scene at a proper distance, he may for several days keep a wife in terrour for her husband, or a mother for her son; and please himself with reflecting, that by his abilities and address some addition is made to the miseries of life.

There is, I think, an ancient law of Scotland, by which *leasing-making* was capitally punished. I am, indeed, far from desiring to increase in this kingdom the number of executions; yet I cannot but think, that they who destroy the confidence of society, weaken the credit of intelligence, and interrupt the

security of life; harass the delicate with shame, and perplex the timorous with alarms; might very properly be awakened to a sense of their crimes, by denunciations of a whipping-post or pillory: since many are so insensible of right and wrong, that they have no standard of action but the law; nor feel guilt, but as they dread punishment.

NUMB. 53. TUESDAY, *May* 8, 1753.

Quisque suos patimur manes. VIRG.

Each has his lot, and bears the fate he drew.

SIR, Fleet, May 6.

IN consequence of my engagements, I address you once more from the habitations of misery. In this place, from which business and pleasure are equally excluded, and in which our only employment and diversion is to hear the narratives of each other, I might much sooner have gathered materials for a letter, had I not hoped to have been reminded of my promise; but since I find myself placed in the regions of oblivion, where I am no less neglected by you than by the rest of mankind, I resolved no longer to wait for solicitation, but stole early this evening from between gloomy sullenness and riotous merriment, to give you an account of part of my companions.

One of the most eminent members of our club is Mr. Edward Scamper, a man of whose name the Olympick heroes would not have been ashamed. Ned was born to a small estate, which he determined to improve; and therefore, as soon as he became of age, mortgaged part of his land to buy a mare and stallion, and bred horses for the course. He was at first very successful, and gained several of the king's plates, as he is now every day boasting, at the expence of very little more than ten times

their value. At last, however, he discovered, that victory brought him more honour than profit: resolving, therefore, to be rich as well as illustrious, he replenished his pockets by another mortgage, became on a sudden a daring better, and resolving not to trust a jockey with his fortune, rode his horse himself, distanced two of his competitors the first heat, and at last won the race by forcing his horse on a descent to full speed at the hazard of his neck. His estate was thus repaired, and some friends that had no souls advised him to give over; but Ned now knew the way to riches, and therefore without caution increased his expences. From this hour he talked and dreamed of nothing but a horse-race; and rising soon to the summit of equestrian reputation, he was constantly expected on every course, divided all his time between lords and jockeys, and, as the unexperienced regulated their bets by his example, gained a great deal of money by laying openly on one horse and secretly on the other. Ned was now so sure of growing rich, that he involved his estate in a third mortgage, borrowed money of all his friends, and risked his whole fortune upon Bay Lincoln. He mounted with beating heart, started fair, and won the first heat; but in the second, as he was pushing against the foremost of his rivals, his girth broke, his shoulder was dislocated, and before he was dismissed by the surgeon, two bailiffs fastened upon him, and he saw Newmarket no more. His daily amusement for four years has been to blow the signal for starting, to make imaginary matches, to repeat the pedigree of Bay Lincoln, and to form resolutions

against trusting another groom with the choice of his girth.

The next in seniority is Mr. Timothy Snug, a man of deep contrivance and impenetrable secrecy. His father died with the reputation of more wealth than he possessed: Tim, therefore, entered the world with a reputed fortune of ten thousand pounds. Of this he very well knew that eight thousand was imaginary: but being a man of refined policy, and knowing how much honour is annexed to riches, he resolved never to detect his own poverty; but furnished his house with elegance, scattered his money with profusion, encouraged every scheme of costly pleasure, spoke of petty losses with negligence, and on the day before an execution entered his doors, had proclaimed at a public table his resolution to be jolted no longer in a hackney coach.

Another of my companions is the magnanimous Jack Scatter, the son of a country gentleman, who, having no other care than to leave him rich, considered that literature could not be had without expence; masters would not teach for nothing; and when a book was bought and read, it would sell for little. Jack was, therefore, taught to read and write by the butler; and when this acquisition was made, was left to pass his days in the kitchen and the stable, where he heard no crime censured but covetousness and distrust of poor honest servants, and where all the praise was bestowed on good housekeeping, and a free heart. At the death of his father, Jack set himself to retrieve the honour of his family: he abandoned his cellar to the butler, or-

dered his groom to provide hay and corn at discretion, took his housekeeper's word for the expences of the kitchen, allowed all his servants to do their work by deputies, permitted his domesticks to keep his house open to their relations and acquaintance, and in ten years was conveyed hither, without having purchased by the loss of his patrimony either honour or pleasure, or obtained any other gratification than that of having corrupted the neighbouring villagers by luxury and idleness.

Dick Serge was a draper in Cornhill, and passed eight years in prosperous diligence, without any care but to keep his books, or any ambition but to be in time an alderman: but then, by some unaccountable revolution in his understanding, he became enamoured of wit and humour, despised the conversation of pedlars and stock-jobbers, and rambled every night to the regions of gaiety, in quest of company suited to his taste. The wits at first flocked about him for sport, and afterwards for interest; some found their way into his books, and some into his pockets; the man of adventure was equipped from his shop for the pursuit of a fortune; and he had sometimes the honour to have his security accepted when his friends were in distress. Elated with these associations, he soon learned to neglect his shop; and having drawn his money out of the funds, to avoid the necessity of teasing men of honour for trifling debts, he has been forced at last to retire hither, till his friends can procure him a post at court.

Another that joins in the same mess is Bob Cornice, whose life has been spent in fitting up a house.

About ten years ago Bob purchased the country habitation of a bankrupt: the mere shell of a building Bob holds no great matter; the inside is the test of elegance. Of this house he was no sooner master than he summoned twenty workmen to his assistance, tore up the floors and laid them anew, stripped off the wainscot, drew the windows from their frames, altered the disposition of doors and fire-places, and cast the whole fabrick into a new form: his next care was to have his ceilings painted, his pannels gilt, and his chimney-pieces carved: every thing was executed by the ablest hands: Bob's business was to follow the workmen with a microscope, and call upon them to retouch their performances, and heighten excellence to perfection. The reputation of his house now brings round him a daily confluence of visitants, and every one tells him of some elegance which he has hitherto overlooked, some convenience not yet procured, or some new mode in ornament or furniture. Bob, who had no wish but to be admired, nor any guide but the fashion, thought every thing beautiful in proportion as it was new, and considered his work as unfinished, while any observer could suggest an addition; some alteration was therefore every day made, without any other motive than the charms of novelty. A traveller at last suggested to him the convenience of a grotto: Bob immediately ordered the mount of his garden to be excavated: and having laid out a large sum in shells and minerals, was busy in regulating the disposition of the colours and lustres, when two gentlemen, who had asked permis-

sion to see his gardens, presented him a writ, and led him off to less elegant apartments.

I know not, Sir, whether among this fraternity of sorrow you will think any much to be pitied; nor indeed do many of them appear to solicit compassion, for they generally applaud their own conduct, and despise those whom want of taste or spirit suffers to grow rich. It were happy if the prisons of the kingdom were filled only with characters like these, men whom prosperity could not make useful, and whom ruin cannot make wise: but there are among us many who raise different sensations, many that owe their present misery to the seductions of treachery, the strokes of casualty, or the tenderness of pity; many whose sufferings disgrace society, and whose virtues would adorn it: of these, when familiarity shall have enabled me to recount their stories without horror, you may expect another narrative from

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

MISARGYRUS.

NUMB. 58. SATURDAY, *May* 25, 1753.

Damnant quod non intelligunt. CIC.

They condemn what they do not understand.

EURIPIDES, having presented Socrates with the writings of Heraclitus, a philosopher famed for involution and obscurity, enquired afterwards his opinion of their merit. "What I understand," said Socrates, "I find to be excellent; and, therefore, believe that to be of equal value which I cannot understand."

The reflection of every man who reads this passage will suggest to him the difference between the practice of Socrates, and that of modern criticks: Socrates, who had, by long observation upon himself and others, discovered the weakness of the strongest, and the dimness of the most enlightened intellect, was afraid to decide hastily in his own favour, or to conclude that an author had written without meaning, because he could not immediately catch his ideas; he knew that the faults of books are often more justly imputable to the reader, who sometimes wants attention, and sometimes penetration; whose understanding is often obstructed by prejudice, and often dissipated by remissness; who comes sometimes to a new study, unfurnished with knowledge previously necessary; and finds difficulties insuperable, for want of ardour sufficient to encounter them.

Obscurity and clearness are relative terms: to some readers scarce any book is easy, to others not many are difficult: and surely they, whom neither any exuberant praise bestowed by others, nor any eminent conquests over stubborn problems, have entitled to exalt themselves above the common orders of mankind, might condescend to imitate the candour of Socrates; and where they find incontestable proofs of superior genius, be content to think that there is justness in the connexion which they cannot trace, and cogency in the reasoning which they cannot comprehend.

This diffidence is never more reasonable than in the perusal of the authors of antiquity; of those whose works have been the delight of ages, and transmitted as the great inheritance of mankind from one generation to another: surely, no man can, without the utmost arrogance, imagine that he brings any superiority of understanding to the perusal of these books which have been preserved in the devastation of cities, and snatched up from the wreck of nations; which those who fled before barbarians have been careful to carry off in the hurry of migration, and of which barbarians have repented the destruction. If in books thus made venerable by the uniform attestation of successive ages, any passages shall appear unworthy of that praise which they have formerly received, let us not immediately determine, that they owed their reputation to dulness or bigotry; but suspect at least that our ancestors had some reasons for their opinions, and that our ignorance of those reasons makes us differ from them.

It often happens that an author's reputation is endangered in succeeding times, by that which raised the loudest applause among his contemporaries: nothing is read with greater pleasure than allusions to recent facts, reigning opinions, or present controversies; but when facts are forgotten, and controversies extinguished, these favourite touches lose all their graces; and the author in his descent to posterity must be left to the mercy of chance, without any power of ascertaining the memory of those things, to which he owed his luckiest thoughts and his kindest reception.

On such occasions, every reader should remember the diffidence of Socrates, and repair by his candour the injuries of time: he should impute the seeming defects of his author to some chasm of intelligence, and suppose that the sense which is now weak was once forcible, and the expression which is now dubious formerly determinate.

How much the mutilation of ancient history has taken away from the beauty of poetical performances, may be conjectured from the light which a lucky commentator sometimes effuses, by the recovery of an incident that had been long forgotten: thus, in the third book of Horace, Juno's denunciations against those that should presume to raise again the walls of Troy, could for many ages please only by splendid images and swelling language, of which no man discovered the use or propriety, till Le Fevre, by showing on what occasion the Ode was written, changed wonder to rational delight. Many passages yet undoubtedly remain in the same author,

which an exacter knowledge of the incidents of his time would clear from objections. Among these I have always numbered the following lines:

Aurum per medios ire satellites,
Et perrumpere amat saxa, potentius
Ictu fulmineo. Concidit Auguris
Argivi domus ob lucrum
Demersa excidio. Diffidit urbium
Portas vir Macedo, et subruit æmulos
Reges muneribus. Munera navium
Sævos illaqueant duces.

Stronger than thunder's winged force,
All-powerful gold can spread its course,
Thro' watchful guards its passage make,
And loves thro' solid walls to break:
From gold the overwhelming woes
That crush'd the Grecian augur rose:
Philip with gold thro' cities broke,
And rival monarchs felt his yoke;
Captains of ships to gold are slaves,
Tho' fierce as their own winds and waves. FRANCIS.

The close of this passage, by which every reader is now disappointed and offended, was probably the delight of the Roman Court: it cannot be imagined, that Horace, after having given to gold the force of thunder, and told of its power to storm cities and to conquer kings, would have concluded his account of its efficacy with its influence over naval commanders, had he not alluded to some fact then current in the mouths of men, and therefore more interesting for a time than the conquests of Philip.

Of the like kind may be reckoned another stanza in the same book:

——Jussa coram non sine conscio
Surgit marito, seu vocat institor
Seu navis Hispanæ magister
Dedecorum pretiosus emptor.

The conscious husband bids her rise,
When some rich factor courts her charms,
Who calls the wanton to his arms,
And, prodigal of wealth and fame,
Profusely buys the costly shame. FRANCIS.

He has little knowledge of Horace who imagines that the *factor*, or the *Spanish merchant*, are mentioned by chance: there was undoubtedly some popular story of an intrigue, which those names recalled to the memory of his reader.

The flame of his genius in other parts, though somewhat dimmed by time, is not totally eclipsed; his address and judgment yet appear, though much of the spirit and vigour of his sentiment is lost: this has happened to the twentieth Ode of the first book;

Vile potabis modicis Sabinum
Cantharis, Græcâ quod ego ipse testâ
Conditum levi; datus in theatro
Cùm tibi plausus,
Chare Mœcenas eques. Ut paterni
Fluminis ripæ, simul et jocosa
Redderet laudes tibi Vaticani
Montis imago.

A poet's beverage humbly cheap,
(Should great Mæcenas be my guest)
The vintage of the Sabine grape,
But yet in sober cups shall crown the feast:
'Twas rack'd into a Grecian cask,
Its rougher juice to melt away;
I seal'd it too—a pleasing task!
With annual joy to mark the glorious day,
When in applausive shouts thy name
Spread from the theatre around,
Floating on thy own Tiber's stream,
And Echo, playful nymph, return'd the sound.

FRANCIS.

We here easily remark the intertexture of a happy compliment with an humble invitation; but certainly are less delighted than those, to whom the mention of the applause bestowed upon Mæcenas, gave occasion to recount the actions or words that produced it.

Two lines which have exercised the ingenuity of modern criticks, may, I think, be reconciled to the judgment, by an easy supposition: Horace thus addresses Agrippa:

Scriberis Vario fortis, et hostium
Victor, Mæonii carminis alite.

Varius, a *swan of Homer's wing*,
Shall brave Agrippa's conquests sing.

That Varius should be called "A bird of Homeric song," appears so harsh to modern ears, that an emendation of the text has been proposed: but surely the learning of the ancients had been long

ago obliterated, had every man thought himself at liberty to corrupt the lines which he did not understand. If we imagine that Varius had been by any of his contemporaries celebrated under the appellation of *Musarum Ales*, the swan of the Muses, the language of Horace becomes graceful and familiar; and that such a compliment was at least possible, we know from the transformation feigned by Horace of himself.

The most elegant compliment that was paid to Addison, is of this obscure and perishable kind;

> When panting Virtue her last efforts made,
> You brought your CLIO to the virgin's aid.

These lines must please as long as they are understood; but can be understood only by those that have observed Addison's signatures in the Spectator.

The nicety of these minute allusions I shall exemplify by another instance, which I take this occasion to mention, because, as I am told, the commentators have omitted it. Tibullus addresses Cynthia in this manner:

> *Te spectem, suprema mihi cùm venerit hora,*
> *Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.*
>
> Before my closing eyes dear Cynthia stand,
> Held weakly by my fainting trembling hand.

To these lines Ovid thus refers in his elegy on the death of Tibullus:

Cynthia decedens, felicius, inquit, amata
Sum tibi; vixisti dum tuus ignis eram.
Cui Nemesis, quid, ait, tibi sunt mea damna dolori?
Me tenuit moriens deficiente manu.

Blest was my reign, retiring Cynthia cry'd;
Nor till he left my breast, Tibullus dy'd.
Forbear, said Nemesis, my loss to moan,
The fainting trembling hand was mine alone.

The beauty of this passage, which consists in the appropriation made by Nemesis of the line originally directed to Cynthia, had been wholly imperceptible to succeeding ages, had chance, which has destroyed so many greater volumes, deprived us likewise of the poems of Tibullus.

NUMB. 62. SATURDAY, *June* 9, 1753.

O fortuna viris, invida fortibus
Quam non æqua bonis præmia dividis. SENECA.

Capricious Fortune ever joys,
With partial hand to deal the prize,
To crush the brave and cheat the wise.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR, Fleet, June 6.

To the account of such of my companions as are imprisoned without being miserable, or are miserable without any claim to compassion; I promised to add the histories of those, whose virtue has made them unhappy or whose misfortunes are at least without a crime. That this catalogue should be very numerous, neither you nor your readers ought to expect: "*rari quippe boni;*" "the good are few." Virtue is uncommon in all the classes of humanity; and I suppose it will scarcely be imagined more frequent in a prison than in other places.

Yet in these gloomy regions is to be found the tenderness, the generosity, the philanthropy of Serenus, who might have lived in competence and ease, if he could have looked without emotion on the miseries of another. Serenus was one of those exalted minds, whom knowledge and sagacity could not make suspicious; who poured out his soul in bound-

less intimacy, and thought community of possessions the law of friendship. The friend of Serenus was arrested for debt, and after many endeavours to soften his creditor, sent his wife to solicit that assistance which never was refused. The tears and importunity of female distress were more than was necessary to move the heart of Serenus; he hasted immediately away, and conferring a long time with his friend, found him confident that if the present pressure was taken off, he should soon be able to re-establish his affairs. Serenus, accustomed to believe, and afraid to aggravate distress, did not attempt to detect the fallacies of hope, nor reflect that every man overwhelmed with calamity believes, that if that was removed he shall immediately be happy: he, therefore, with little hesitation offered himself as surety.

In the first raptures of escape all was joy, gratitude, and confidence: the friend of Serenus displayed his prospects, and counted over the sums of which he should infallibly be master before the day of payment. Serenus in a short time began to find his danger, but could not prevail with himself to repent of beneficence: and therefore suffered himself still to be amused with projects which he durst not consider, for fear of finding them impracticable. The debtor, after he had tried every method of raising money which art or indigence could prompt, wanted either fidelity or resolution to surrender himself to prison, and left Serenus to take his place.

Serenus has often proposed to the creditor, to pay him whatever he shall appear to have lost by the flight of his friend: but however reasonable this pro-

posal may be thought, avarice and brutality have been hitherto inexorable, and Serenus still continues to languish in prison.

In this place, however, where want makes almost every man selfish, or desperation gloomy, it is the good fortune of Serenus not to live without a friend: he passes most of his hours in the conversation of Candidus, a man whom the same virtuous ductility has, with some difference of circumstances, made equally unhappy. Candidus, when he was young, helpless, and ignorant, found a patron that educated, protected, and supported him: his patron being more vigilant for others than himself, left at his death an only son, destitute and friendless. Candidus was eager to repay the benefits he had received; and having maintained the youth for a few years at his own house, afterwards placed him with a merchant of eminence, and gave bonds to a great value as a security for his conduct.

The young man, removed too early from the only eye of which he dreaded the observation, and deprived of the only instruction which he heard with reverence, soon learned to consider virtue as restraint, and restraint as oppression: and to look with a longing eye at every expence to which he could not reach, and every pleasure which he could not partake: by degrees he deviated from his first regularity, and unhappily mingling among young men busy in dissipating the gains of their fathers' industry, he forgot the precepts of Candidus, spent the evening in parties of pleasure, and the morning in expedients to support his riots. He was,

however, dexterous and active in business: and his master, being secured against any consequences of dishonesty, was very little solicitous to inspect his manners, or to enquire how he passed those hours, which were not immediately devoted to the business of his profession: when he was informed of the young man's extravagance or debauchery, "let his bondsman look to that," said he, "I have taken care of myself."

Thus the unhappy spendthrift proceeded from folly to folly, and from vice to vice, with the connivance if not the encouragement of his master; till in the heat of a nocturnal revel he committed such violences in the street as drew upon him a criminal prosecution. Guilty and unexperienced, he knew not what course to take; to confess his crime to Candidus, and solicit his interposition, was little less dreadful than to stand before the frown of a court of justice. Having, therefore, passed the day with anguish in his heart and distraction in his looks, he seized at night a very large sum of money in the compting house, and setting out he knew not whither, was heard of no more.

The consequence of his flight was the ruin of Candidus; ruin surely undeserved and irreproachable, and such as the laws of a just government ought either to prevent or repair: nothing is more inequitable than that one man should suffer for the crimes of another, for crimes which he neither prompted nor permitted, which he could neither foresee nor prevent. When we consider the weakness of human resolutions and the inconsistency

of human conduct, it must appear absurd that one man shall engage for another, that he will not change his opinions or alter his conduct.

It is, I think, worthy of consideration, whether, since no wager is binding without a possibility of loss on each side, it is not equally reasonable, that no contract should be valid without reciprocal stipulations; but in this case, and others of the same kind, what is stipulated on his side to whom the bond is given? he takes advantage of the security, neglects his affairs, omits his duty, suffers timorous wickedness to grow daring by degrees, permits appetite to call for new gratifications, and, perhaps, secretly longs for the time in which he shall have power to seize the forfeiture; and if virtue or gratitude should prove too strong for temptation, and a young man persist in honesty, however instigated by his passions, what can secure him at last against a false accusation? I for my part always shall suspect, that he who can by such methods secure his property, will go one step farther to increase it; nor can I think that man safely trusted with the means of mischief, who, by his desire to have them in his hands, gives an evident proof how much less he values his neighbour's happiness than his own.

Another of our companions is Lentulus, a man whose dignity of birth was very ill supported by his fortune. As some of the first offices in the kingdom were filled by his relations, he was early invited to court, and encouraged by caresses and promises to attendance and solicitation; a constant appearance in splendid company necessarily required magnifi-

cence of dress; and a frequent participation of fashionable amusements forced him into expence: but these measures were requisite to his success; since every body knows, that to be lost to sight is to be lost to remembrance, and that he who desires to fill a vacancy, must be always at hand, lest some man of greater vigilance should step in before him.

By this course of life his little fortune was every day made less: but he received so many distinctions in publick, and was known to resort so familiarly to the houses of the great, that every man looked on his preferment as certain, and believed that its value would compensate for its slowness: he, therefore, found no difficulty in obtaining credit for all that his rank or his vanity made necessary: and, as ready payment was not expected, the bills were proportionably enlarged, and the value of the hazard or delay were adjusted solely by the equity of the creditor. At length death deprived Lentulus of one of his patrons, and a revolution in the ministry of another; so that all his prospects vanished at once, and those that had before encouraged his expences, began to perceive that their money was in danger; there was now no other contention but who should first seize upon his person, and, by forcing immediate payment, deliver him up naked to the vengeance of the rest. In pursuance of this scheme, one of them invited him to a tavern, and procured him to be arrested at the door; but Lentulus instead of endeavouring secretly to pacify him by payment, gave notice to the rest, and offered to divide amongst them the remnant of his fortune: they feasted six hours at his expence, to

deliberate on his proposal; and at last determined, that as he could not offer more than five shillings in the pound, it would be more prudent to keep him in prison, till he could procure from his relations the payment of his debts.

Lentulus is not the only man confined within these walls, on the same account: the like procedure, upon the like motives, is common among men whom yet the law allows to partake the use of fire and water with the compassionate and the just; who frequent the assemblies of commerce in open day, and talk with detestation and contempt of highwaymen or housebreakers: but, surely, that man must be confessedly robbed, who is compelled, by whatever means, to pay the debts which he does not owe: nor can I look with equal hatred upon him, who, at the hazard of his life, holds out his pistol and demands my purse, as on him who plunders under shelter of the law, and by detaining my son or my friend in prison, extorts from me the price of their liberty. No man can be more an enemy to society than he, by whose machinations our virtues are turned to our disadvantage; he is less destructive to mankind that plunders cowardice, than he that preys upon compassion.

I believe, Mr. Adventurer, you will readily confess, that though not one of these, if tried before a commercial judicature, can be wholly acquitted from imprudence or temerity; yet that, in the eye of all who can consider virtue as distinct from wealth, the fault of two of them, at least, is outweighed by the merit; and that of the third is so much extenuated

by the circumstances of his life, as not to deserve a perpetual prison: yet must these, with multitudes equally blameless, languish in confinement, till malevolence shall relent, or the law be changed.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

MISARGYRUS.

NUMB. 67. TUESDAY, *June* 26, 1753.

Inventas——vitam excoluere per artes. VIRG.

They polish life by useful arts.

THAT familiarity produces neglect, has been long observed. The effect of all external objects, however great or splendid, ceases with their novelty; the courtier stands without emotion in the royal presence; the rustick tramples under his foot the beauties of the spring with little attention to their colours or their fragrance; and the inhabitant of the coast darts his eye upon the immense diffusion of waters, without awe, wonder, or terrour.

Those who have past much of their lives in this great city, look upon its opulence and its multitudes, its extent and variety, with cold indifference; but an inhabitant of the remoter parts of the kingdom is immediately distinguished by a kind of dissipated curiosity, a busy endeavour to divide his attention

amongst a thousand objects, and a wild confusion of astonishment and alarm.

The attention of a new comer is generally first struck by the multiplicity of cries that stun him in the streets, and the variety of merchandize and manufactures which the shop-keepers expose on every hand; and he is apt, by unwary bursts of admiration to excite the merriment and contempt of those who mistake the use of their eyes for effects of their understanding, and confound accidental knowledge with just reasoning.

But, surely, these are subjects on which any man may without reproach employ his meditations: the innumerable occupations, among which the thousands that swarm in the streets of London, are distributed, may furnish employment to minds of every cast, and capacities of every degree. He that contemplates the extent of this wonderful city, finds it difficult to conceive, by what method plenty is maintained in our markets, and how the inhabitants are regularly supplied with the necessaries of life; but when he examines the shops and warehouses, sees the immense stores of every kind of merchandize piled up for sale, and runs over all the manufactures of art and products of nature, which are every where attracting his eye and soliciting his purse, he will be inclined to conclude, that such quantities cannot easily be exhausted, and that part of mankind must soon stand still for want of employment, till the wares already provided shall be worn out and destroyed.

As Socrates was passing through the fair at

Athens, and casting his eyes over the shops and customers, "how many things are here," says he, "that I do not want!" The same sentiment is every moment rising in the mind of him that walks the streets of London, however inferior in philosophy to Socrates: he beholds a thousand shops crowded with goods, of which he can scarcely tell the use, and which, therefore, he is apt to consider as of no value: and indeed, many of the arts by which families are supported, and wealth is heaped together, are of that minute and superfluous kind, which nothing but experience could evince possible to be prosecuted with advantage, and which, as the world might easily want, it could scarcely be expected to encourage.

But so it is, that custom, curiosity, or wantonness, supplies every art with patrons, and finds purchasers for every manufacture; the world is so adjusted, that not only bread, but riches may be obtained without great abilities or arduous performances: the most unskilful hand and unenlightened mind have sufficient incitements to industry; for he that is resolutely busy, can scarcely be in want. There is, indeed, no employment, however despicable, from which a man may not promise himself more than competence, when he sees thousands and myriads raised to dignity, by no other merit than that of contributing to supply their neighbours with the means of sucking smoke through a tube of clay; and others raising contributions upon those, whose elegance disdains the grossness of smoky luxury, by grinding the same materials into a powder that may at once gratify and impair the smell.

Not only by these popular and modish trifles, but by a thousand unheeded and evanescent kinds of business, are the multitudes of this city preserved from idleness, and consequently from want. In the endless variety of tastes and circumstances that diversify mankind, nothing is so superfluous, but that some one desires it: or so common, but that some one is compelled to buy it. As nothing is useless but because it is in improper hands, what is thrown away by one is gathered up by another; and the refuse of part of mankind furnishes a subordinate class with the materials necessary to their support.

When I look round upon those who are thus variously exerting their qualifications, I cannot but admire the secret concatenation of society that links together the great and the mean, the illustrious and the obscure; and consider with benevolent satisfaction, that no man, unless his body or mind be totally disabled, has need to suffer the mortification of seeing himself useless or burthensome to the community: he that will diligently labour, in whatever occupation, will deserve the sustenance which he obtains, and the protection which he enjoys; and may lie down every night with the pleasing consciousness of having contributed something to the happiness of life.

Contempt and admiration are equally incident to narrow minds: he whose comprehension can take in the whole subordination of mankind, and whose perspicacity can pierce to the real state of things through the thin veils of fortune or of fashion, will discover meanness in the highest stations, and dignity in the meanest; and find that no man can

become venerable but by virtue, or contemptible but by wickedness.

In the midst of this universal hurry, no man ought to be so little influenced by example, or so void of honest emulation, as to stand a lazy spectator of incessant labour; or please himself with the mean happiness of a drone, while the active swarms are buzzing about him: no man is without some quality, by the due application of which he might deserve well of the world; and whoever he be that has but little in his power, should be in haste to do that little, lest he be confounded with him that can do nothing.

By this general concurrence of endeavours, arts of every kind have been so long cultivated, that all the wants of man may be immediately supplied; idleness can scarcely form a wish which she may not gratify by the toil of others, or curiosity dream of a toy, which the shops are not ready to afford her.

Happiness is enjoyed only in proportion as it is known; and such is the state or folly of man, that it is known only by experience of its contrary: we who have long lived amidst the conveniencies of a town immensely populous, have scarce an idea of a place where desire cannot be gratified by money. In order to have a just sense of this artificial plenty, it is necessary to have passed some time in a distant colony, or those parts of our island which are thinly inhabited: he that has once known how many trades every man in such situations is compelled to exercise, with how much labour the products of nature must

be accommodated to human use, how long the loss or defect of any common utensil must be endured, or by what awkward expedients it must be supplied, how far men may wander with money in their hands before any can sell them what they wish to buy, will know how to rate at its proper value the plenty and ease of a great city.

But that the happiness of man may still remain imperfect, as wants in this place are easily supplied, new wants likewise are easily created; every man, in surveying the shops of London, sees numberless instruments and conveniencies, of which, while he did not know them, he never felt the need; and yet, when use has made them familiar, wonders how life could be supported without them. Thus it comes to pass, that our desires always increase with our possessions; the knowledge that something remains yet unenjoyed, impairs our enjoyment of the good before us.

They who have been accustomed to the refinements of science, and multiplications of contrivance, soon lose their confidence in the unassisted powers of nature, forget the paucity of our real necessities, and overlook the easy methods by which they may be supplied. It were a speculation worthy of a philosophical mind, to examine how much is taken away from our native abilities, as well as added to them, by artificial expedients. We are so accustomed to give and receive assistance, that each of us singly can do little for himself; and there is scarce any one among us, however contracted may be his form of life, who does not enjoy the labour of a thousand artists.

But a survey of the various nations that inhabit the earth will inform us, that life may be supported with less assistance; and that the dexterity, which practice enforced by necessity produces, is able to effect much by very scanty means. The nations of Mexico and Peru erected cities and temples without the use of iron; and at this day the rude Indian supplies himself with all the necessaries of life: sent like the rest of mankind naked into the world, as soon as his parents have nursed him up to strength, he is to provide by his own labour for his own support. His first care is to find a sharp flint among the rocks; with this he undertakes to fell the trees of the forest; he shapes his bow, heads his arrows, builds his cottage, and hollows his canoe, and from that time lives in a state of plenty and prosperity; he is sheltered from the storms, he is fortified against beasts of prey, he is enabled to pursue the fish of the sea, and the deer of the mountains; and as he does not know, does not envy the happiness of polished nations, where gold can supply the want of fortitude and skill, and he whose laborious ancestors have made him rich, may lie stretched upon a couch, and see all the treasures of all the elements poured down before him.

This picture of a savage life if it shows how much individuals may perform, shows likewise how much society is to be desired. Though the perseverance and address of the Indian excite our admiration, they nevertheless cannot procure him the conveniencies which are enjoyed by the vagrant beggar of a civilized country: he hunts like a wild beast to satisfy

his hunger: and when he lies down to rest after a successful chase, cannot pronounce himself secure against the danger of perishing in a few days; he is, perhaps, content with his condition, because he knows not that a better is attainable by man; as he that is born blind does not long for the perception of light, because he cannot conceive the advantages which light would afford him; but hunger, wounds, and weariness, are real evils, though he believes them equally incident to all his fellow-creatures; and when a tempest compels him to lie starving in his hut, he cannot justly be concluded equally happy with those whom art has exempted from the power of chance, and who make the foregoing year provide for the following.

To receive and to communicate assistance, constitutes the happiness of human life: man may, indeed, preserve his existence in solitude, but can enjoy it only in society; the greatest understanding of an individual, doomed to procure food and clothing for himself, will barely supply him with expedients to keep off death from day to day; but as one of a large community performing only his share of the common business, he gains leisure for intellectual pleasures, and enjoys the happiness of reason and reflection.

NUMB. 69. TUESDAY, *July* 3, 1753.

Ferè libenter homines id quod volunt credunt. CÆSAR.

Men willingly believe what they wish to be true.

TULLY has long ago observed, that no man, however weakened by long life, is so conscious of his own decrepitude, as not to imagine that he may yet hold his station in the world for another year.

Of the truth of this remark every day furnishes new confirmation: there is no time of life, in which men for the most part seem less to expect the stroke of death, than when every other eye sees it impending; or are more busy in providing for another year, than when it is plain to all but themselves, that at another year they cannot arrive. Though every funeral that passes before their eyes evinces the deceitfulness of such expectations, since every man who is born to the grave thought himself equally certain of living at least to the next year; the survivor still continues to flatter himself, and is never at a loss for some reason why his life should be protracted, and the voracity of death continue to be pacified with some other prey.

But this is only one of the innumerable artifices practised in the universal conspiracy of mankind against themselves: every age and every condition indulges some darling fallacy; every man amuses

himself with projects which he knows to be improbable, and which, therefore, he resolves to pursue without daring to examine them. Whatever any man ardently desires, he very readily believes that he shall some time attain: he whose intemperance has overwhelmed him with diseases, while he languishes in the spring, expects vigour and recovery from the summer sun; and while he melts away in the summer, transfers his hopes to the frosts of winter: he that gazes upon elegance or pleasure, which want of money hinders him from imitating or partaking, comforts himself that the time of distress will soon be at an end, and that every day brings him nearer to a state of happiness; though he knows it has passed not only without acquisition of advantage, but perhaps without endeavours after it, in the formation of schemes that cannot be executed, and in the contemplation of prospects which cannot be approached.

Such is the general dream in which we all slumber out our time: every man thinks the day coming, in which he shall be gratified with all his wishes, in which he shall leave all those competitors behind, who are now rejoicing like himself in the expectation of victory; the day is always coming to the servile in which they shall be powerful, to the obscure in which they shall be eminent, and to the deformed in which they shall be beautiful.

If any of my readers has looked with so little attention on the world about him, as to imagine this representation exaggerated beyond probability, let him reflect a little upon his own life; let him consider what were his hopes and prospects ten years

ago, and what additions he then expected to be made by ten years to his happiness: those years are now elapsed; have they made good the promise that was extorted from them, have they advanced his fortune, enlarged his knowledge, or reformed his conduct, to the degree that was once expected? I am afraid, every man that recollects his hopes must confess his disappointment; and own that day has glided unprofitably after day, and that he is still at the same distance from the point of happiness.

With what consolations can those, who have thus miscarried in their chief design, elude the memory of their ill success? with what amusements can they pacify their discontent, after the loss of so large a portion of life? they can give themselves up again to the same delusions, they can form new schemes of airy gratifications, and fix another period of felicity; they can again resolve to trust the promise which they know will be broken, they can walk in a circle with their eyes shut, and persuade themselves to think that they go forward.

Of every great and complicated event, part depends upon causes out of our power, and part must be effected by vigour and perseverance. With regard to that which is styled in common language the work of chance, men will always find reasons for confidence or distrust, according to their different tempers or inclinations; and he that has been long accustomed to please himself with possibilities of fortuitous happiness, will not easily or willingly be reclaimed from his mistake. But the effects of hu-

man industry and skill are more easily subjected to calculation: whatever can be completed in a year, is divisible into parts, of which each may be performed in the compass of a day; he, therefore, that has passed the day without attention to the task assigned him, may be certain, that the lapse of life has brought him no nearer to his object; for whatever idleness may expect from time, its produce will be only in proportion to the diligence with which it has been used. He that floats lazily down the stream, in pursuit of something borne along by the same current, will find himself indeed move forward; but unless he lays his hand to the oar, and increases his speed by his own labour, must be always at the same distance from that which he is following.

There have happened in every age some contingencies of unexpected and undeserved success, by which those who are determined to believe whatever favours their inclinations, have been encouraged to delight themselves with future advantages; they support confidence by considerations, of which the only proper use is to chase away despair: it is equally absurd to sit down in idleness because some have been enriched without labour, as to leap a precipice because some have fallen and escaped with life, or to put to sea in a storm because some have been driven from a wreck upon the coast to which they are bound.

We are all ready to confess, that belief ought to be proportioned to evidence or probability: let any man, therefore, compare the number of those who have been thus favoured by fortune, and of those who have failed of their expectations, and he will easily

determine, with what justness he has registered himself in the lucky catalogue.

But there is no need on these occasions for deep enquiries or laborious calculations; there is a far easier method of distinguishing the hopes of folly from those of reason, of finding the difference between prospects that exist before the eyes, and those that are only painted on a fond imagination. Tom Drowsy had accustomed himself to compute the profit of a darling project till he had no longer any doubt of its success; it was at last matured by close consideration, all the measures were accurately adjusted, and he wanted only five hundred pounds to become master of a fortune that might be envied by a director of a trading company. Tom was generous and grateful, and was resolved to recompense this small assistance with an ample fortune: he, therefore, deliberated for a time, to whom amongst his friends he should declare his necessities; not that he suspected a refusal, but because he could not suddenly determine which of them would make the best use of riches, and was, therefore, most worthy of his favour. At last his choice was settled; and knowing that in order to borrow he must show the probability of repayment, he prepared for a minute and copious explanation of his project. But here the golden dream was at an end: he soon discovered the impossibility of imposing upon others the notions by which he had so long imposed upon himself; which way soever he turned his thoughts, impossibility and absurdity arose in opposition on every side; even credulity and prejudice were at last forced to give way, and he grew ashamed

of crediting himself what shame would not suffer him to communicate to another.

To this test let every man bring his imaginations, before they have been too long predominant in his mind. Whatever is true will bear to be related, whatever is rational will endure to be explained; but when we delight to brood in secret over future happiness, and silently to employ our meditations upon schemes of which we are conscious that the bare mention would expose us to derision and contempt; we should then remember, that we are cheating ourselves by voluntary delusions; and giving up to the unreal mockeries of fancy, those hours in which solid advantages might be attained by sober thought and rational assiduity.

There is, indeed, so little certainty in human affairs, that the most cautious and severe examiner may be allowed to indulge some hopes which he cannot prove to be much favoured by probability; since, after his utmost endeavours to ascertain events, he must often leave the issue in the hands of chance. And so scanty is our present allowance of happiness, that in many situations life could scarcely be supported, if hope were not allowed to relieve the present hour by pleasures borrowed from futurity; and reanimate the languor of dejection to new efforts, by pointing to distant regions of felicity, which yet no resolution or perseverance shall ever reach.

But these, like all other cordials, though they may invigorate in a small quantity, intoxicate in a greater; these pleasures, like the rest, are lawful only in certain circumstances, and to certain degrees; they may be useful in a due subserviency to nobler

purposes, but become dangerous and destructive when once they gain the ascendant in the heart: to soothe the mind to tranquillity by hope, even when that hope is likely to deceive us, may be sometimes useful; but to lull our faculties in a lethargy is poor and despicable.

Vices and errours are differently modified, according to the state of the minds to which they are incident; to indulge hope beyond the warrant of reason, is the failure alike of mean and elevated understandings; but its foundation and its effects are totally different: the man of high courage and great abilities is apt to place too much confidence in himself, and to expect from a vigorous exertion of his powers more than spirit or diligence can attain: between him and his wish he sees obstacles indeed, but he expects to overleap or break them; his mistaken ardour hurries him forward; and though perhaps he misses his end, he nevertheless obtains some collateral good, and performs something useful to mankind and honourable to himself.

The drone of timidity presumes likewise to hope, but without ground and without consequence; the bliss with which he solaces his hours, he always expects from others, though very often he knows not from whom: he folds his arms about him, and sits in expectation of some revolution in the state that shall raise him to greatness, or some golden shower that shall load him with wealth; he dozes away the day in musing upon the morrow; and at the end of life is roused from his dream only to discover that the time of action is past, and that he can now show his wisdom only by repentance.

NUMB. 74. SATURDAY, *July* 21, 1753.

Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro. HOR.

I miss'd my end, and lost my way,
By crack-brain'd wisdom led astray.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR,

IT has long been charged by one part of mankind upon the other, that they will not take advice; that counsel and instruction are generally thrown away; and that, in defiance both of admonition and example, all claim the right to choose their own measures, and to regulate their own lives.

That there is something in advice very useful and salutary, seems to be equally confessed on all hands: since even those that reject it, allow for the most part that rejection to be wrong, but charge the fault upon the unskilful manner in which it is given: they admit the efficacy of the medicine, but abhor the nauseousness of the vehicle.

Thus mankind have gone on from century to century: some have been advising others how to act, and some have been teaching the advisers how to advise; yet very little alteration has been made in the world. As we must all by the law of nature enter life in ignorance, we must all make our way through it by the light of our own experience; and for any security that advice has been yet able to

afford, must endeavour after success at the hazard of miscarriage, and learn to do right by venturing to do wrong.

By advice I would not be understood to mean, the everlasting and invariable principles of moral and religious truth, from which no change of external circumstances can justify any deviation; but such directions as respect merely the prudential part of conduct, and which may be followed or neglected without any violation of essential duties.

It is, indeed, not so frequently to make us good as to make us wise, that our friends employ the officiousness of counsel; and among the rejectors of advice, who are mentioned by the grave and sententious with so much acrimony, you will not so often find the vicious and abandoned, as the pert and the petulant, the vivacious and the giddy.

As the great end of female education is to get a husband, this likewise is the general subject of female advice: and the dreadful denunciation against those volatile girls, who will not listen patiently to the lectures of wrinkled wisdom, is, that they will die unmarried, or throw themselves away upon some worthless fellow, who will never be able to keep them a coach.

I being naturally of a ductile and easy temper, without strong desires or quick resentments, was always a favourite amongst the elderly ladies, because I never rebelled against seniority, nor could be charged with thinking myself wise before my time; but heard every opinion with submissive silence, professed myself ready to learn from all who

seemed inclined to teach me, paid the same grateful acknowledgments for precepts contradictory to each other, and if any controversy arose, was careful to side with her who presided in the company.

Of this compliance I very early found the advantage; for my aunt Matilda left me a very large addition to my fortune, for this reason chiefly, as she herself declared, because I was not above hearing good counsel, but would sit from morning till night to be instructed, while my sister Sukey, who was a year younger than myself, and was, therefore, in greater want of information, was so much conceited of her own knowledge, that whenever the good lady in the ardour of benevolence reproved or instructed her, she would pout or titter, interrupt her with questions, or embarrass her with objections.

I had no design to supplant my sister by this complaisant attention; nor, when the consequence of my obsequiousness came to be known, did Sukey so much envy as despise me: I was, however, very well pleased with my success; and having received, from the concurrent opinion of all mankind, a notion that to be rich was to be great and happy, I thought I had obtained my advantages at an easy rate, and resolved to continue the same passive attention, since I found myself so powerfully recommended by it to kindness and esteem.

The desire of advising has a very extensive prevalence; and since advice cannot be given but to those that will hear it, a patient listener is necessary to the accommodation of all those who desire

to be confirmed in the opinion of their own wisdom: a patient listener, however, is not always to be had; the present age, whatever age is present, is so vitiated and disordered that young people are readier to talk than to attend, and good counsel is only thrown away upon those who are full of their own perfections.

I was, therefore, in this scarcity of good sense, a general favourite; and seldom saw a day in which some sober matron did not invite me to her house, or take me out in her chariot, for the sake of instructing me how to keep my character in this censorious age, how to conduct myself in the time of courtship, how to stipulate for a settlement, how to manage a husband of every character, regulate my family, and educate my children.

We are all naturally credulous in our own favour. Having been so often caressed and applauded for docility, I was willing to believe myself really enlightened by instruction, and completely qualified for the task of life. I did not doubt but I was entering the world with a mind furnished against all exigencies, with expedients to extricate myself from every difficulty, and sagacity to provide against every danger; I was, therefore, in haste to give some specimen of my prudence, and to show that this liberality of instruction had not been idly lavished upon a mind incapable of improvement.

My purpose, for why should I deny it? was like that of other women, to obtain a husband of rank and fortune superior to my own; and in this I had the

concurrence of all those that had assumed the province of directing me. That the woman was undone who married below herself, was universally agreed: and though some ventured to assert, that the richer man ought invariably to be preferred, and that money was a sufficient compensation for a defective ancestry; yet the majority declared warmly for a gentleman, and were of opinion that upstarts should not be encouraged.

With regard to other qualifications I had an irreconcilable variety of instructions. I was sometimes told that deformity was no defect in a man; and that he who was not encouraged to intrigue by an opinion of his person, was more likely to value the tenderness of his wife: but a grave widow directed me to choose a man who might imagine himself agreeable to me, for that the deformed were always insupportably vigilant, and apt to sink into sullenness, or burst into rage, if they found their wife's eye wandering for a moment to a good face or a handsome shape.

They were, however, all unanimous in warning me, with repeated cautions, against all thoughts of union with a wit, as a being with whom no happiness could possibly be enjoyed: men of every other kind I was taught to govern, but a wit was an animal for whom no arts of taming had been yet discovered: the woman whom he could once get within his power, was considered as lost to all hope of dominion or of quiet: for he would detect artifice and defeat allurement; and if once he discovered any failure of conduct, would believe his

own eyes, in defiance of tears, caresses, and protestations.

In pursuance of these sage principles, I proceeded to form my schemes; and while I was yet in the first bloom of youth, was taken out at an assembly by Mr. Frisk. I am afraid my cheeks glowed, and my eyes sparkled; for I observed the looks of all my superintendants fixed anxiously upon me; and I was next day cautioned against him from all hands, as a man of the most dangerous and formidable kind, who had writ verses to one lady, and then forsaken her only because she could not read them, and had lampooned another for no other fault than defaming his sister.

Having been hitherto accustomed to obey, I ventured to dismiss Mr. Frisk, who happily did not think me worth the labour of a lampoon. I was then addressed by Mr. Sturdy, and congratulated by all my friends on the manors of which I was shortly to be lady: but Sturdy's conversation was so gross, that after the third visit I could endure him no longer; and incurred, by dismissing him, the censure of all my friends, who declared that my nicety was greater than my prudence, and that they feared it would be my fate at last to be wretched with a wit.

By a wit, however, I was never afterwards attacked, but lovers of every other class, or pretended lovers, I have often had; and, notwithstanding the advice constantly given me, to have no regard in my choice to my own inclinations, I could not forbear to discard some for vice, and some for rudeness. I was once loudly censured for re-

fusing an old gentleman who offered an enormous jointure, and died of the phthisic a year after; and was so baited with incessant importunities, that I should have given my hand to Drone the stock-jobber, had not the reduction of interest made him afraid of the expences of matrimony.

Some, indeed, I was permitted to encourage; but miscarried of the main end, by treating them according to the rules of art which had been prescribed me. Altilis, an old maid, infused into me so much haughtiness and reserve, that some of my lovers withdrew themselves from my frown, and returned no more; others were driven away, by the demands of settlement which the widow Trapland directed me to make; and I have learned, by many experiments, that to ask advice is to lose opportunity.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

PERDITA.

NUMB. 81. TUESDAY, *August* 14, 1753.

Nil desperandum. HOR.

Avaunt despair.

I HAVE sometimes heard it disputed in conversation, whether it be more laudable or desirable, that a man should think too highly or too meanly of himself: it is on all hands agreed to be best, that he should think rightly; but since a fallible being will always make some deviations from exact rectitude, it is not wholly useless to enquire towards which side it is safer to decline.

The prejudices of mankind seem to favour him who errs by underrating his own powers: he is considered as a modest and harmless member of society, not likely to break the peace by competition, to endeavour after such splendour of reputation as may dim the lustre of others, or to interrupt any in the enjoyment of themselves; he is no man's rival, and, therefore, may be every man's friend.

The opinion which a man entertains of himself ought to be distinguished, in order to an accurate discussion of this question, as it relates to persons or to things. To think highly of ourselves in comparison with others, to assume by our own authority that precedence which none is willing to grant, must be always invidious and offensive; but to rate our powers high in proportion to things, and imagine

ourselves equal to great undertakings, while we leave others in possession of the same abilities, cannot with equal justice provoke censure.

It must be confessed, that self-love may dispose us to decide too hastily in our own favour: but who is hurt by the mistake? If we are incited by this vain opinion to attempt more than we can perform, ours is the labour, and ours is the disgrace.

But he that dares to think well of himself, will not always prove to be mistaken; and the good effects of his confidence will then appear in great attempts and great performances: if he should not fully complete his design, he will at least advance it so far as to leave an easier task for him that succeeds him; and even though he should wholly fail, he will fail with honour.

But from the opposite errour, from torpid despondency, can come no advantage; it is the frost of the soul, which binds up all its powers, and congeals life in perpetual sterility. He that has no hopes of success, will make no attempts; and where nothing is attempted, nothing can be done.

Every man should, therefore, endeavour to maintain in himself a favourable opinion of the powers of the human mind; which are, perhaps, in every man, greater than they appear, and might, by diligent cultivation, be exalted to a degree beyond what their possessor presumes to believe. There is scarce any man but has found himself able, at the instigation of necessity, to do what in a state of leisure and deliberation he would have concluded impossible; and some of our species have signalized themselves by

such achievements, as prove that there are few things above human hope.

It has been the policy of all nations to preserve, by some public monuments, the memory of those who have served their country by great exploits: there is the same reason for continuing or reviving the names of those, whose extensive abilities have dignified humanity. An honest emulation may be alike excited; and the philosopher's curiosity may be inflamed by a catalogue of the works of Boyle or Bacon, as Themistocles was kept awake by the trophies of Miltiades.

Among the favourites of nature that have from time to time appeared in the world, enriched with various endowments and contrarieties of excellence, none seems to have been more exalted above the common rate of humanity, than the man known about two centuries ago by the appellation of the Admirable Crichton; of whose history, whatever we may suppress as surpassing credibility, yet we shall, upon incontestable authority, relate enough to rank him among prodigies.

"Virtue," says Virgil, "is better accepted when it comes in a pleasing form:" the person of Crichton was eminently beautiful; but his beauty was consistent with such activity and strength, that in fencing he would spring at one bound the length of twenty feet upon his antagonist; and he used the sword in either hand with such force and dexterity, that scarce any one had courage to engage him.

Having studied at St. Andrew's in Scotland, he went to Paris in his twenty-first year, and affixed on

the gate of the college of Navarre a kind of challenge to the learned of that university to dispute with him on a certain day: offering to his opponents, whoever they should be, the choice of ten languages, and of all the faculties and sciences. On the day appointed three thousand auditors assembled, when four doctors of the church and fifty masters appeared against him; and one of his antagonists confesses, that the doctors were defeated; that he gave proofs of knowledge above the reach of man; and that a hundred years passed without food or sleep, would not be sufficient for the attainment of his learning. After a disputation of nine hours he was presented by the president and professors with a diamond and a purse of gold, and dismissed with repeated acclamations.

From Paris he went away to Rome, where he made the same challenge, and had in the presence of the Pope and cardinals the same success. Afterwards he contracted at Venice an acquaintance with Aldus Manutius, by whom he was introduced to the learned of that city: then visited Padua, where he engaged in another publick disputation, beginning his performance with an extemporal poem in praise of the city and the assembly then present, and concluding with an oration equally unpremeditated in commendation of ignorance.

He afterwards published another challenge, in which he declared himself ready to detect the errors of Aristotle and all his commentators, either in the common forms of logick, or in any which his antagonists should propose of a hundred different kinds of verse.

These acquisitions of learning, however stupendous, were not gained at the expence of any pleasure which youth generally indulges, or by the omission of any accomplishment in which it becomes a gentleman to excel: he practised in great perfection the arts of drawing and painting, he was an eminent performer in both vocal and instrumental musick, he danced with uncommon gracefulness, and on the day after his disputation at Paris exhibited his skill in horsemanship before the court of France, where at a publick match of tilting, he bore away the ring upon his lance fifteen times together.

He excelled likewise in domestic games of less dignity and reputation: and in the interval between his challenge and disputation at Paris, he spent so much of his time at cards, dice, and tennis, that a lampoon was fixed upon the gate of the Sorbonne, directing those that would see this monster of erudition, to look for him at the tavern.

So extensive was his acquaintance with life and manners, that in an Italian comedy composed by himself, and exhibited before the court of Mantua, he is said to have personated fifteen different characters; in all which he might succeed without great difficulty, since he had such power of retention, that once hearing an oration of an hour, he would repeat it exactly, and in the recital follow the speaker through all his variety of tone and gesticulation.

Nor was his skill in arms less than in learning, or his courage inferior to his skill: there was a prize-fighter at Mantua, who travelling about the world, according to the barbarous custom of that age, as a

general challenger, had defeated the most celebrated masters in many parts of Europe; and in Mantua, where he then resided, had killed three that appeared against him. The duke repented that he had granted him his protection; when Crichton, looking on his sanguinary success with indignation, offered to stake fifteen hundred pistoles, and mount the stage against him. The duke, with some reluctance, consented, and on the day fixed the combatants appeared: their weapon seems to have been single rapier, which was then newly introduced in Italy. The prize-fighter advanced with great violence and fierceness, and Crichton contented himself calmly to ward his passes, and suffered him to exhaust his vigour by his own fury. Crichton then became the assailant; and pressed upon him with such force and agility, that he thrust him thrice through the body, and saw him expire: he then divided the prize he had won among the widows whose husbands had been killed.

The death of this wonderful man I should be willing to conceal, did I not know that every reader will enquire curiously after that fatal hour, which is common to all human beings, however distinguished from each other by nature or by fortune.

The duke of Mantua, having received so many proofs of his various merit, made him tutor to his son Vicentio di Gonzaga, a prince of loose manners and turbulent disposition. On this occasion it was, that he composed the comedy in which he exhibited so many different characters with exact propriety. But his honour was of short continuance; for as he

was one night in the time of Carnival rambling about the streets, with his guitar in his hand, he was attacked by six men masked. Neither his courage nor skill in this exigence deserted him: he opposed them with such activity and spirit, that he soon dispersed them, and disarmed their leader, who throwing off his mask, discovered himself to be the prince his pupil. Crichton, falling on his knees, took his own sword by the point, and presented it to the prince; who immediately seized it, and instigated, as some say, by jealousy, according to others, only by drunken fury and brutal resentment, thrust him through the heart.

Thus was the Admirable Crichton brought into that state, in which he could excel the meanest of mankind only by a few empty honours paid to his memory: the court of Mantua testified their esteem by a publick mourning, the contemporary wits were profuse of their encomiums, and the palaces of Italy were adorned with pictures, representing him on horseback with a lance in one hand and a book in the other.

NUMB. 84. SATURDAY, *August* 25, 1753.

——— *Tolle periculum,*
Jam vaga prosiliet frœnis natura remotis. HOR.

But take the danger and the shame away,
And vagrant nature bounds upon her prey. FRANCIS.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR,

IT has been observed, I think, by Sir William Temple, and after him by almost every other writer, that England affords a greater variety of characters than the rest of the world. This is ascribed to the liberty prevailing amongst us, which gives every man the privilege of being wise or foolish his own way, and preserves him from the necessity of hypocrisy or the servility of imitation.

That the position itself is true, I am not completely satisfied. To be nearly acquainted with the people of different countries can happen to very few; and in life, as in every thing else beheld at a distance, there appears an even uniformity: the petty discriminations which diversify the natural character, are not discoverable but by a close inspection; we, therefore, find them most at home, because there we have most opportunities of remarking them. Much less am I convinced, that this peculiar diversification, if it be real, is the con-

sequence of peculiar liberty; for where is the government to be found that superintends individuals with so much vigilance, as not to leave their private conduct without restraint? Can it enter into a reasonable mind to imagine, that men of every other nation are not equally masters of their own time or houses with ourselves, and equally at liberty to be parsimonious or profuse, frolick or sullen, abstinent or luxurious? Liberty is certainly necessary to the full play of predominant humours; but such liberty is to be found alike under the government of the many or the few, in monarchies or in commonwealths.

How readily the predominant passion snatches an interval of liberty, and how fast it expands itself when the weight of restraint is taken away, I had lately an opportunity to discover, as I took a journey into the country in a stage coach; which, as every journey is a kind of adventure, may be very properly related to you, though I can display no such extraordinary assembly as Cervantes has collected at Don Quixote's inn.

In a stage coach, the passengers are for the most part wholly unknown to one another, and without expectation of ever meeting again when their journey is at an end; one should therefore imagine, that it was of little importance to any of them, what conjectures the rest should form concerning him. Yet so it is, that as all think themselves secure from detection, all assume that character of which they are most desirous, and on no occasion is the general ambition of superiority more apparently indulged.

On the day of our departure, in the twilight of the

morning, I ascended the vehicle with three men and two women, my fellow travellers. It was easy to observe the affected elevation of mien with which every one entered, and the supercilious civility with which they paid their compliments to each other. When the first ceremony was dispatched, we sat silent for a long time, all employed in collecting importance into our faces, and endeavouring to strike reverence and submission into our companions.

It is always observable that silence propagates itself, and that the longer talk has been suspended, the more difficult it is to find any thing to say. We began now to wish for conversation; but no one seemed inclined to descend from his dignity, or first propose a topick of discourse. At last a corpulent gentleman, who had equipped himself for this expedition with a scarlet surtout and a large hat with a broad lace, drew out his watch, looked on it in silence, and then held it dangling at his finger. This was, I suppose, understood by all the company as an invitation to ask the time of the day, but nobody appeared to heed his overture; and his desire to be talking so far overcame his resentment, that he let us know of his own accord that it was past five, and that in two hours we should be at breakfast.

His condescension was thrown away: we continued all obdurate; the ladies held up their heads; I amused myself with watching their behaviour; and of the other two, one seemed to employ himself in counting the trees as we drove by them, the other drew his hat over his eyes, and counterfeited a slumber. The man of benevolence, to show that he was not

depressed by our neglect, hummed a tune, and beat time upon his snuff-box.

Thus universally displeased with one another, and not much delighted with ourselves, we came at last to the little inn appointed for our repast; and all began at once to recompense themselves for the constraint of silence, by innumerable questions and orders to the people that attended us. At last, what every one had called for was got, or declared impossible to be got at that time, and we were persuaded to sit round the same table; when the gentleman in the red surtout looked again upon his watch, told us that we had half an hour to spare, but he was sorry to see so little merriment among us; that all fellow travellers were for the time upon the level, and that it was always his way to make himself one of the company. "I remember," says he, "it was on just such a morning as this, that I and my Lord Mumble and the Duke of Tenterden were out upon a ramble: we called at a little house as it might be this; and my landlady, I warrant you, not suspecting to whom she was talking, was so jocular and facetious, and made so many merry answers to our questions, that we were all ready to burst with laughter. At last the good woman happening to overhear me whisper the duke and call him by his title, was so surprised and confounded, that we could scarcely get a word from her; and the duke never met me from that day to this, but he talks of the little house, and quarrels with me for terrifying the landlady."

He had scarcely time to congratulate himself on the veneration which this narrative must have pro-

cured him from the company, when one of the ladies having reached out for a plate on a distant part of the table, began to remark, "the inconveniencies of travelling, and the difficulty which they who never sat at home without a great number of attendants, found in performing for themselves such offices as the road required; but that people of quality often travelled in disguise, and might be generally known from the vulgar by their condescension to poor innkeepers, and the allowance which they made for any defect in their entertainment; that for her part, while people were civil and meant well, it was never her custom to find fault, for one was not to expect upon a journey all that one enjoyed at one's own house."

A general emulation seemed now to be excited. One of the men who had hitherto said nothing, called for the last newspaper; and having perused it a while with deep pensiveness, "It is impossible," says he, "for any man to guess how to act with regard to the stocks; last week it was the general opinion that they would fall; and I sold out twenty thousand pounds in order to a purchase: they have now risen unexpectedly; and I make no doubt but at my return to London I shall risk thirty thousand pounds among them again."

A young man, who had hitherto distinguished himself only by the vivacity of his looks, and a frequent diversion of his eyes from one object to another, upon this closed his snuff-box, and told us that "he had a hundred times talked with the chancellor and the judges on the subject of the stocks; that for his part he did not pretend to be well acquainted with

the principles on which they were established, but had always heard them reckoned pernicious to trade, uncertain in their produce, and unsolid in their foundation; and that he had been advised by three judges, his most intimate friends, never to venture his money in the funds, but to put it out upon land security, till he could light upon an estate in his own country."

It might be expected, that upon these glimpses of latent dignity, we should all have begun to look round us with veneration; and have behaved like the princes of romance, when the enchantment that disguises them is dissolved, and they discover the dignity of each other; yet it happened, that none of these hints made much impression on the company; every one was apparently suspected of endeavouring to impose false appearances upon the rest; all continued their haughtiness in hopes to enforce their claims; and all grew every hour more sullen, because they found their representations of themselves without effect.

Thus we travelled on four days with malevolence perpetually increasing, and without any endeavour but to outvie each other in superciliousness and neglect; and when any two of us could separate ourselves for a moment, we vented our indignation at the sauciness of the rest.

At length the journey was at an end; and time and chance, that strip off all disguises, have discovered that the intimate of lords and dukes is a nobleman's butler, who has furnished a shop with the money he has saved; the man who deals so largely

in the funds, is the clerk of a broker in 'Change-alley; the lady who so carefully concealed her quality, keeps a cook-shop behind the Exchange; and the young man who is so happy in the friendship of the judges, engrosses and transcribes for bread in a garret of the Temple. Of one of the women only I could make no disadvantageous detection, because she had assumed no character, but accommodated herself to the scene before her, without any struggle for distinction or superiority.

I could not forbear to reflect on the folly of practising a fraud, which, as the event showed, had been already practised too often to succeed, and by the success of which no advantage could have been obtained; of assuming a character, which was to end with the day; and of claiming upon false pretences honours which must perish with the breath that paid them.

But, Mr. Adventurer, let not those who laugh at me and my companions, think this folly confined to a stage coach. Every man in the journey of life takes the same advantage of the ignorance of his fellow travellers, disguises himself in counterfeited merit, and hears those praises with complacency which his conscience reproaches him for accepting. Every man deceives himself while he thinks he is deceiving others; and forgets that the time is at hand when every illusion shall cease, when fictitious excellence shall be torn away, and *all* must be shown to *all* in their real estate.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

VIATOR.

NUMB. 85. TUESDAY, *August* 28, 1753.

Qui cupit optatam cursu contingere metam,
Multa tulit fecitque puer. HOR.

The youth, who hopes th' Olympick prize to gain,
All arts must try, and every toil sustain. FRANCIS.

IT is observed by Bacon, that "reading makes a full man, conversation a ready man, and writing an exact man."

As Bacon attained to degrees of knowledge scarcely ever reached by any other man, the directions which he gives for study have certainly a just claim to our regard; for who can teach an art with so great authority, as he that has practised it with undisputed success?

Under the protection of so great a name, I shall, therefore, venture to inculcate to my ingenious contemporaries, the necessity of reading, the fitness of consulting other understandings than their own, and of considering the sentiments and opinions of those who, however neglected in the present age, had in their own times, and many of them a long time afterwards, such reputation for knowledge and acuteness as will scarcely ever be attained by those that despise them.

An opinion has of late been, I know not how, propagated among us, that libraries are filled only

with useless lumber; that men of parts stand in need of no assistance; and that to spend life in poring upon books, is only to imbibe prejudices, to obstruct and embarrass the powers of nature, to cultivate memory at the expence of judgment, and to bury reason under a chaos of indigested learning.

Such is the talk of many who think themselves wise, and of some who are thought wise by others; of whom part probably believe their own tenets, and part may be justly suspected of endeavouring to shelter their ignorance in multitudes, and of wishing to destroy that reputation which they have no hopes to share. It will, I believe, be found invariably true, that learning was never decried by any learned man; and what credit can be given to those who venture to condemn that which they do not know?

If reason has the power ascribed to it by its advocates, if so much is to be discovered by attention and meditation, it is hard to believe, that so many millions, equally participating of the bounties of nature with ourselves, have been for ages upon ages meditating in vain: if the wits of the present time expect the regard of posterity, which will then inherit the reason which is now thought superior to instruction, surely they may allow themselves to be instructed by the reason of former generations. When, therefore, an author declares, that he has been able to learn nothing from the writings of his predecessors, and such a declaration has been lately made, nothing but a degree of arrogance unpardonable in the greatest human understanding, can hinder him from per-

ceiving that he is raising prejudices against his own performance; for with what hopes of success can he attempt that in which greater abilities have hitherto miscarried? or with what peculiar force does he suppose himself invigorated, that difficulties hitherto invincible should give way before him?

Of those whom Providence has qualified to make any additions to human knowledge, the number is extremely small; and what can be added by each single mind, even of this superior class, is very little: the greatest part of mankind must owe all their knowledge, and all must owe far the larger part of it, to the information of others. To understand the works of celebrated authors, to comprehend their systems, and retain their reasonings, is a task more than equal to common intellects; and he is by no means to be accounted useless or idle, who has stored his mind with acquired knowledge, and can detail it occasionally to others who have less leisure or weaker abilities.

Persius has justly observed, that knowledge is nothing to him who is not known by others to possess it: to the scholar himself it is nothing with respect either to honour or advantage, for the world cannot reward those qualities which are concealed from it; with respect to others it is nothing, because it affords no help to ignorance or errour.

It is with justice, therefore, that in an accomplished character, Horace unites just sentiments with the power of expressing them; and he that has once accumulated learning, is next to consider, how he shall most widely diffuse and most agreeably impart it.

A ready man is made by conversation. He that buries himself among his manuscripts "besprent," as Pope expresses it, "with learned dust," and wears out his days and nights in perpetual research and solitary meditation, is too apt to lose in his elocution what he adds to his wisdom; and when he comes into the world, to appear overloaded with his own notions, like a man armed with weapons which he cannot wield. He has no facility of inculcating his speculations, of adapting himself to the various degrees of intellect which the accidents of conversation will present; but will talk to most unintelligibly, and to all unpleasantly.

I was once present at the lectures of a profound philosopher, a man really skilled in the science which he professed, who having occasion to explain the terms *opacum* and *pellucidum*, told us, after some hesitation, that *opacum* was, as one might say, *opake*, and that *pellucidum* signified *pellucid*. Such was the dexterity with which this learned reader facilitated to his auditors the intricacies of science; and so true is it, that a man may know what he cannot teach.

Boerhaave complains, that the writers who have treated of chymistry before him, are useless to the greater part of students, because they presuppose their readers to have such degrees of skill as are not often to be found. Into the same errour are all men apt to fall, who have familiarized any subject to themselves in solitude: they discourse, as if they thought every other man had been employed in the same enquiries; and expect that short hints and obscure

allusions will produce in others the same train of ideas which they excite in themselves.

Nor is this the only inconvenience which the man of study suffers from a recluse life. When he meets with an opinion that pleases him, he catches it up with eagerness; looks only after such arguments as tend to his confirmation; or spares himself the trouble of discussion, and adopts it with very little proof; indulges it long without suspicion, and in times unites it to the general body of his knowledge, and treasures it up among incontestable truths: but when he comes into the world among men who, arguing upon dissimilar principles, have been led to different conclusions, and being placed in various situations, view the same object on many sides; he finds his darling position attacked, and himself in no condition to defend it: having thought always in one train, he is in the state of a man who having fenced always with the same master, is perplexed and amazed by a new posture of his antagonist; he is entangled in unexpected difficulties, he is harassed by sudden objections, he is unprovided with solutions or replies; his surprise impedes his natural powers of reasoning, his thoughts are scattered and confounded, and he gratifies the pride of airy petulance with an easy victory.

It is difficult to imagine, with what obstinacy truths which one mind perceives almost by intuition, will be rejected by another; and how many artifices must be practised, to procure admission for the most evident propositions into understandings frighted by their novelty, or hardened against them by accidental

prejudice; it can scarcely be conceived, how frequently, in these extemporaneous controversies, the dull will be subtle, and the acute absurd; how often stupidity will elude the force of argument, by involving itself in its own gloom; and mistaken ingenuity will weave artful fallacies, which reason can scarcely find means to disentangle.

In these encounters the learning of the recluse usually fails him: nothing but long habit and frequent experiments can confer the power of changing a position into various forms, presenting it in different points of view, connecting it with known and granted truths, fortifying it with intelligible arguments, and illustrating it by apt similitudes; and he, therefore, that has collected his knowledge in solitude, must learn its application by mixing with mankind.

But while the various opportunities of conversation invite us to try every mode of argument, and every art of recommending our sentiments, we are frequently betrayed to the use of such as are not in themselves strictly defensible: a man heated in talk, and eager of victory, takes advantage of the mistakes or ignorance of his adversary, lays hold of concessions to which he knows he has no right, and urges proofs likely to prevail on his opponent, though he knows himself that they have no force: thus the severity of reason is relaxed, many topicks are accumulated, but without just arrangement or distinction; we learn to satisfy ourselves with such ratiocination as silences others; and seldom recall to a close examination, that discourse which has gratified our vanity with victory and applause.

Some caution, therefore, must be used lest copiousness and facility be made less valuable by inaccuracy and confusion. To fix the thoughts by writing, and subject them to frequent examinations and reviews, is the best method of enabling the mind to detect its own sophisms, and keep it on guard against the fallacies which it practises on others: in conversation we naturally diffuse our thoughts, and in writing we contract them; method is the excellence of writing, and unconstraint the grace of conversation.

To read, write, and converse in due proportions, is, therefore, the business of a man of letters. For all these there is not often equal opportunity; excellence, therefore, is not often attainable; and most men fail in one or other of the ends proposed, and are full without readiness, or ready without exactness. Some deficiency must be forgiven all, because all are men; and more must be allowed to pass uncensured in the greater part of the world, because none can confer upon himself abilities, and few have the choice of situations proper for the improvement of those which nature has bestowed: it is, however, reasonable to have *perfection* in our eye; that we may always advance towards it, though we know it never can be reached.

NUMB. 92. SATURDAY, *September* 22, 1753.

Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti. HOR.

Bold be the critick, zealous to his trust,
Like the firm judge inexorably just.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR,

IN the papers of criticism which you have given to the publick, I have remarked a spirit of candour and love of truth, equally remote from bigotry and captiousness: a just distribution of praise amongst the ancients and the moderns: a sober deference to reputation long established, without a blind adoration of antiquity; and a willingness to favour later performances, without a light or puerile fondness for novelty.

I shall, therefore, venture to lay before you, such observations as have risen to my mind in the consideration of Virgil's pastorals, without any enquiry how far my sentiments deviate from established rules or common opinions.

If we survey the ten pastorals in a general view, it will be found that Virgil can derive from them very little claim to the praise of an inventor. To search into the antiquity of this kind of poetry, is not my present purpose; that it has long subsisted in the east, the *Sacred Writings* sufficiently inform us; and we may conjecture, with great probability,

that it was sometimes the devotion, and sometimes the entertainment of the first generations of mankind. Theocritus united elegance with simplicity; and taught his shepherds to sing with so much ease and harmony, that his countrymen, despairing to excel, forbore to imitate him; and the Greeks, however vain or ambitious, left him in quiet possession of the garlands which the wood nymphs had bestowed upon him.

Virgil, however, taking advantage of another language, ventured to copy or to rival the *Sicilian bard;* he has written with greater splendour of diction, and elevation of sentiment: but as the magnificence of his performances was more, the simplicity was less; and, perhaps where he excels Theocritus, he sometimes obtains his superiority by deviating from the pastoral character, and performing what Theocritus never attempted.

Yet, though I would willingly pay to Theocritus the honour which is always due to an original author, I am far from intending to depreciate Virgil: of whom Horace justly declares, that the rural muses have appropriated to him their elegance and sweetness, and who, as he copied Theocritus in his design, has resembled him likewise in his success; for, if we except Calphurnius, an obscure author of the lower ages, I know not that a single pastoral was written after him by any poet, till the revival of literature.

But though his general merit has been universally acknowledged, I am far from thinking all the productions of his rural Thalia equally excellent; there is, indeed, in all his pastorals a strain of ver-

sification which it is vain to seek in any other poet; but if we except the first and the tenth, they seem liable either wholly or in part to considerable objections.

The second, though we should forget the great charge against it, which I am afraid can never be refuted, might, I think, have perished, without any diminution of the praise of its author; for I know not that it contains one affecting sentiment or pleasing description, or one passage that strikes the imagination or awakens the passions.

The third contains a contest between two shepherds, begun with a quarrel of which some particulars might well be spared, carried on with spriteliness and elegance, and terminated at last in a reconciliation: but, surely, whether the invectives with which they attack each other be true or false, they are too much degraded from the dignity of pastoral innocence; and instead of rejoicing that they are both victorious, I should not have grieved could they have been both defeated.

The poem to Pollio is, indeed, of another kind: it is filled with images at once splendid and pleasing, and is elevated with grandeur of language worthy of the first of Roman poets; but I am not able to reconcile myself to the disproportion between the performance and the occasion that produced it: that the golden age should return because Pollio had a son, appears so wild a fiction, that I am ready to suspect the poet of having written for some other purpose, what he took this opportunity of producing to the publick.

The fifth contains a celebration of Daphnis, which has stood to all succeeding ages as the model of pastoral elegies. To deny praise to a performance which so many thousands have laboured to imitate, would be to judge with too little deference for the opinion of mankind: yet whoever shall read it with impartiality, will find that most of the images are of the mythological kind, and therefore easily invented; and that there are few sentiments of rational praise or natural lamentation.

In the Silenus he again rises to the dignity of philosophick sentiments, and heroick poetry. The address to Varus is eminently beautiful: but since the compliment paid to Gallus fixes the transaction to his own time, the fiction of Silenus seems injudicious: nor has any sufficient reason yet been found, to justify his choice of those fables that make the subject of the song.

The seventh exhibits another contest of the tuneful shepherds: and, surely, it is not without some reproach to his inventive power, that of ten pastorals Virgil has written two upon the same plan. One of the shepherds now gains an acknowledged victory, but without any apparent superiority, and the reader, when he sees the prize adjudged, is not able to discover how it was deserved.

Of the eighth pastoral, so little is properly the work of Virgil, that he has no claim to other praise or blame than that of a translator.

Of the ninth, it is scarce possible to discover the design or tendency; it is said, I know not upon what authority, to have been composed from frag-

ments of other poems; and except a few lines in which the author touches upon his own misfortunes, there is nothing that seems appropriated to any time or place, or of which any other use can be discovered than to fill up the poem.

The first and the tenth pastorals, whatever be determined of the rest, are sufficient to place their author above the reach of rivalry. The complaint of Gallus disappointed in his love, is full of such sentiments as disappointed love naturally produces; his wishes are wild, his resentment is tender, and his purposes are inconstant. In the genuine language of despair, he soothes himself awhile with the pity that shall be paid him after his death.

——*Tamen cantabitis, Arcades, inquit,*
Montibus hæc vestris; soli cantare periti
Arcades. O mihi tum quam molliter ossa quiescant,
Vestra meos olim si fistula dicat amores!

——Yet, O Arcadian swains,
Ye best artificers of soothing strains!
Tune your soft reeds, and teach your rocks my woes,
So shall my shade in sweeter rest repose.
O that your birth and business had been mine;
To feed the flock, and prune the spreading vine!

WARTON.

Discontented with his present condition, and desirous to be any thing but what he is, he wishes himself one of the shepherds. He then catches the idea of rural tranquillity; but soon discovers how much happier he should be in these happy regions, with Lycoris at his side:

Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori:
Hic nemus; hic ipso tecum consumerer ævo.
Nunc insanus amor duri me Martis in armis,
Tela inter media, atque adversos detinet hostes.
Tu procul a patria (nec sit mihi credere) tantum
Alpinas, ah dura, nives, & frigora Rheni
Me sine sola vides. Ah te ne frigora lædant!
Ah tibi ne teneras glacies secet aspera plantas!

Here cooling fountains roll thro' flow'ry meads,
Here woods, Lycoris, lift their verdant heads;
Here could I wear my careless life away,
And in thy arms insensibly decay.
Instead of that, me frantick love detains,
'Mid foes, and dreadful darts, and bloody plains:
While you—and can my soul the tale believe,
Far from your country, lonely wand'ring leave
Me, me your lover, barbarous fugitive!
Seek the rough Alps where snows eternal shine,
And joyless borders of the frozen Rhine.
Ah! may no cold e'er blast my dearest maid,
Nor pointed ice thy tender feet invade. WARTON.

He then turns his thoughts on every side, in quest of something that may solace or amuse him: he proposes happiness to himself, first in one scene and then in another: and at last finds that nothing will satisfy:

Jam neque Hamadryades rursum, nec carmina nobis
Ipsa placent: ipsæ rursum concedite sylvæ.
Non illum nostri possunt mutare labores;
Nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,
Sithoniasque nives hyemis subeamus aquosæ:
Nec si, cum moriens alta liber aret in ulmo

Æthiopum versemus oves sub sidere Cancri.
Omnia vincit amor; et nos cedamus amori.

But now again no more the woodland maids,
Nor pastoral songs delight—Farewell, ye shades—
No toils of ours the cruel god can change,
Tho' lost in frozen deserts we should range;
Tho' we should drink where chilling Hebrus flows,
Endure bleak winter blasts, and Thracian snows:
Or on hot India's plains our flocks should feed,
Where the parch'd elm declines his sickening head,
Beneath fierce-glowing Cancer's fiery beams,
Far from cool breezes and refreshing streams.
Love over all maintains resistless sway,
And let us love's all-conquering power obey. WARTON.

But notwithstanding the excellence of the tenth pastoral, I cannot forbear to give the preference to the first, which is equally natural and more diversified. The complaint of the shepherd, who saw his old companion at ease in the shade, while himself was driving his little flock he knew not whither, is such as, with variation of circumstances, misery always utters at the sight of prosperity:

Nos patriæ fines, & dulcia linquimus arva;
Nos patriam fugimus: tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra,
Formosam resonare doces Amaryllida sylvas.

We leave our country's bounds, our much-lov'd plains;
We from our country fly, unhappy swains!
You, Tit'rus, in the groves at leisure laid,
Teach Amaryllis' name to every shade. WARTON.

His account of the difficulties of his journey, gives a very tender image of pastoral distress:

——En ipse capellas
Protenus æger ago: hanc etiam vix, Tityre, duco:
Hic inter densas corylos modo namque gemellos,
Spem gregis, ah! silice in nuda connixa reliquit.

And lo! sad partner of the general care,
Weary and faint I drive my goats afar!
While scarcely this my leading hand sustains,
Tired with the way, and recent from her pains;
For 'mid yon tangled hazels as we past,
On the bare flints her hapless twin she cast,
The hopes and promise of my ruin'd fold! WARTON.

The description of Virgil's happiness in his little farm, combines almost all the images of rural pleasure; and he, therefore, that can read it with indifference, has no sense of pastoral poetry:

Fortunate senex, ergo tua rura manebunt,
Et tibi magna satis; quamvis lapis omnia nudus,
Limosoque palus obducat pascua junco:
Non insueta graves tentabunt pabula fœtas,
Nec mala vicini pecoris contagia lædent.
Fortunate senex, hic inter flumina nota,
Et fontes sacros, frigus captabis opacum.
Hinc tibi, quæ semper vicino ab limite sepes,
Hyblæis apibus florem depasta salicti,
Sæpe levi somnum suadebit inire susurro.
Hinc altâ sub rupe canet frondator ad auras;
Nec tamen interea raucæ, tua cura, palumbes,
Nec gemere aëria cessabit turtur ab ulmo.

Happy old man! then still thy farms restored,
Enough for thee, shall bless thy frugal board.
What tho' rough stones the naked soil o'erspread,
Or marshy bulrush rear its wat'ry head,

No foreign food thy teeming ewes shall fear,
No touch contagious spread its influence here.
Happy old man! here 'mid th' accustom'd streams
And sacred springs, you 'll shun the scorching beams;
While from yon willow-fence, thy picture's bound,
The bees that suck their flow'ry stores around,
Shall sweetly mingle with the whispering boughs
Their lulling murmurs, and invite repose:
While from steep rocks the pruner's song is heard;
Nor the soft-cooing dove, thy fav'rite bird,
Meanwhile shall cease to breathe her melting strain,
Nor turtles from th' aërial elm to 'plain.

WARTON.

It may be observed, that these two poems were produced by events that really happened; and may, therefore, be of use to prove, that we can always feel more than we can imagine, and that the most artful fiction must give way to truth.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

DUBIUS.

NUMB. 95. TUESDAY, *October* 2, 1753.

——*Dulcique animos novitate tenebo.* OVID.

And with sweet novelty your soul detain.

IT is often charged upon writers, that with all their pretensions to genius and discoveries, they do little more than copy one another; and that compositions obtruded upon the world with the pomp of novelty, contain only tedious repetitions of common sentiments, or at best exhibit a transposition

of known images, and give a new appearance to truth only by some slight difference of dress and decoration.

The allegation of resemblance between authors is indisputably true; but the charge of plagiarism, which is raised upon it, is not to be allowed with equal readiness. A coincidence of sentiment may easily happen without any communication, since there are many occasions in which all reasonable men will nearly think alike. Writers of all ages have had the same sentiments, because they have in all ages had the same objects of speculation; the interests and passions, the virtues and vices of mankind, have been diversified in different times, only by unessential and casual varieties: and we must, therefore, expect in the works of all those who attempt to describe them, such a likeness as we find in the pictures of the same person drawn in different periods of his life.

It is necessary, therefore, that before an author be charged with plagiarism, one of the most reproachful, though, perhaps, not the most atrocious of literary crimes, the subject on which he treats should be carefully considered. We do not wonder, that historians, relating the same facts, agree in their narration; or that authors, delivering the elements of science, advance the same theorems, and lay down the same definitions: yet it is not wholly without use to mankind, that books are multiplied, and that different authors lay out their labours on the same subject; for there will always be some reason why one should on particular occasions, or to particular

persons, be preferable to another; some will be clear where others are obscure, some will please by their style and others by their method, some by their embellishments and others by their simplicity, some by closeness and others by diffusion.

The same indulgence is to be shown to the writers of morality: right and wrong are immutable; and those, therefore, who teach us to distinguish them, if they all teach us right, must agree with one another. The relations of social life, and the duties resulting from them, must be the same at all times and in all nations: some petty differences may be, indeed, produced, by forms of government or arbitrary customs; but the general doctrine can receive no alteration.

Yet it is not to be desired, that morality should be considered as interdicted to all future writers: men will always be tempted to deviate from their duty, and will, therefore, always want a monitor to recall them; and a new book often seizes the attention of the publick, without any other claim than that it is new. There is likewise in composition, as in other things, a perpetual vicissitude of fashion; and truth is recommended at one time to regard, by appearances which at another would expose it to neglect; the author, therefore, who has judgment to discern the taste of his contemporaries, and skill to gratify it, will have always an opportunity to deserve well of mankind, by conveying instruction to them in a grateful vehicle.

There are likewise many modes of composition, by which a moralist may deserve the name of an ori-

ginal writer: he may familiarise his system by dialogues after the manner of the ancients, or subtilize it into a series of syllogistic arguments: he may enforce his doctrine by seriousness and solemnity, or enliven it by spriteliness and gaiety: he may deliver his sentiments in naked precepts, or illustrate them by historical examples: he may detain the studious by the artful concatenation of a continued discourse, or relieve the busy by short strictures, and unconnected essays.

To excel in any of these forms of writing will require a particular cultivation of the genius: whoever can attain to excellence, will be certain to engage a set of readers, whom no other method would have equally allured; and he that communicates truth with success, must be numbered among the first benefactors to mankind.

The same observation may be extended likewise to the passions: their influence is uniform, and their effects nearly the same in every human breast: a man loves and hates, desires and avoids, exactly like his neighbour; resentment and ambition, avarice and indolence, discover themselves by the same symptoms in minds distant a thousand years from one another.

Nothing, therefore, can be more unjust, than to charge an author with plagiarism, merely because he assigns to every cause its natural effect; and makes his personages act, as others in like circumstances have always done. There are conceptions in which all men will agree, though each derives them from

his own observation: whoever has been in love, will represent a lover impatient of every idea that interrupts his meditations on his mistress, retiring to shades and solitude, that he may muse without disturbance on his approaching happiness, or associating himself with some friend that flatters his passion, and talking away the hours of absence upon his darling subject. Whoever has been so unhappy as to have felt the miseries of long-continued hatred, will, without any assistance from ancient volumes, be able to relate how the passions are kept in perpetual agitation, by the recollection of injury and meditations of revenge; how the blood boils at the name of the enemy, and life is worn away in contrivances of mischief.

Every other passion is alike simple and limited, if it be considered only with regard to the breast which it inhabits; the anatomy of the mind, as that of the body, must perpetually exhibit the same appearances; and though by the continued industry of successive enquirers, new movements will be from time to time discovered, they can affect only the minuter parts, and are commonly of more curiosity than importance.

It will now be natural to enquire, by what arts are the writers of the present and future ages to attract the notice and favour of mankind. They are to observe the alterations which time is always making in the modes of life, that they may gratify every generation with a picture of themselves. Thus love is uniform, but courtship is perpetually varying: the different arts of gallantry, which beauty has inspired,

would of themselves be sufficient to fill a volume; sometimes balls and serenades, sometimes tournaments and adventures, have been employed to melt the hearts of ladies, who in another century have been sensible of scarce any other merit than that of riches, and listened only to jointures and pin-money. Thus the ambitious man has at all times been eager of wealth and power; but these hopes have been gratified in some countries by supplicating the people, and in others by flattering the prince: honour in some states has been only the reward of military achievements, in others it has been gained by noisy turbulence and popular clamours. Avarice has worn a different form, as she actuated the usurer of Rome, and the stockjobber of England; and idleness itself, how little soever inclined to the trouble of invention, has been forced from time to time to change its amusements, and contrive different methods of wearing out the day.

Here then is the fund, from which those who study mankind may fill their compositions with an inexhaustible variety of images and allusions: and he must be confessed to look with little attention upon scenes thus perpetually changing, who cannot catch some of the figures before they are made vulgar by reiterated descriptions.

It has been discovered by Sir Isaac Newton, that the distinct and primogenial colours are only seven; but every eye can witness, that from various mixtures, in various proportions, infinite diversifications of tints may be produced. In like manner, the passions of the mind, which put the world in motion, and pro-

duce all the bustle and eagerness of the busy crowds that swarm upon the earth; the passions, from whence arise all the pleasures and pains that we see and hear of, if we analyse the mind of man, are very few; but those few agitated and combined, as external causes shall happen to operate, and modified by prevailing opinions and accidental caprices, make such frequent alterations on the surface of life, that the show, while we are busied in delineating it, vanishes from the view, and a new set of objects succeed, doomed to the same shortness of duration with the former: thus curiosity may always find employment, and the busy part of mankind will furnish the contemplative with the materials of speculation to the end of time.

The complaint, therefore, that all topicks are preoccupied, is nothing more than the murmur of ignorance or idleness, by which some discourage others, and some themselves; the mutability of mankind will always furnish writers with new images, and the luxuriance of fancy may always embellish them with new decorations.

NUMB. 99. TUESDAY, *October* 16, 1753.

——— *Magnis tamen excidit ausis.* OVID.

But in the glorious enterprize he dy'd. ADDISON.

IT has always been the practice of mankind, to judge of actions by the event. The same attempts, conducted in the same manner, but terminated by different success, produce different judgments: they who attain their wishes, never want celebrators of their wisdom and their virtue; and they that miscarry, are quickly discovered to have been defective not only in mental but in moral qualities. The world will never be long without some good reason to hate the unhappy; their real faults are immediately detected; and if those are not sufficient to sink them into infamy, an additional weight of calumny will be superadded: he that fails in his endeavours after wealth or power, will not long retain either honesty or courage.

This species of injustice has so long prevailed in universal practice, that it seems likewise to have infected speculation: so few minds are able to separate the ideas of greatness and prosperity, that even Sir William Temple has determined, "that he who can deserve the name of a hero, must not only be virtuous but fortunate."

By this unreasonable distribution of praise and blame, none have suffered oftener than projectors, whose rapidity of imagination and vastness of design

raise such envy in their fellow mortals, that every eye watches for their fall, and every heart exults at their distresses: yet even a projector may gain favour by success; and the tongue that was prepared to hiss, then endeavours to excel others in loudness of applause.

When Coriolanus, in Shakespeare, deserted to Aufidius, the Volscian servants at first insulted him, even while he stood under the protection of the household gods: but when they saw that the project took effect, and the stranger was seated at the head of the table, one of them very judiciously observes, "that he always thought there was more in him than he could think."

Machiavel has justly animadverted on the different notice taken by all succeeding times, of the two great projectors, Catiline and Cæsar. Both formed the same project, and intended to raise themselves to power, by subverting the commonwealth: they pursued their design, perhaps, with equal abilities, and with equal virtue; but Catiline perished in the field, and Cæsar returned from Pharsalia with unlimited authority: and from that time, every monarch of the earth has thought himself honoured by a comparison with Cæsar; and Catiline has been never mentioned, but that his name might be applied to traitors and incendiaries.

In an age more remote, Xerxes projected the conquest of Greece, and brought down the power of Asia against it: but after the world had been filled with expectation and terrour, his army was beaten, his fleet was destroyed, and Xerxes has been never mentioned without contempt.

A few years afterwards, Greece likewise had her turn of giving birth to a projector; who invading Asia with a small army, went forward in search of adventures, and by his escape from one danger, gained only more rashness to rush into another: he stormed city after city, overran kingdom after kingdom, fought battles only for barren victory, and invaded nations only that he might make his way through them to new invasions: but having been fortunate in the execution of his projects, he died with the name of Alexander the Great.

These are, indeed, events of ancient times; but human nature is always the same, and every age will afford us instances of publick censures influenced by events. The great business of the middle centuries, was the holy war; which undoubtedly was a noble project, and was for a long time prosecuted with a spirit equal to that with which it had been contrived; but the ardour of the European heroes only hurried them to destruction; for a long time they could not gain the territories for which they fought, and, when at last gained, they could not keep them: their expeditions, therefore, have been the scoff of idleness and ignorance, their understanding and their virtue have been equally vilified, their conduct has been ridiculed, and their cause has been defamed.

When Columbus had engaged king Ferdinand in the discovery of the other hemisphere, the sailors, with whom he embarked in the expedition, had so little confidence in their commander, that after having been long at sea looking for coasts which they expected never to find, they raised a general mutiny,

and demanded to return. He found means to sooth them into a permission to continue the same course three days longer, and on the evening of the third day descried land. Had the impatience of his crew denied him a few hours of the time requested, what had been his fate but to have come back with the infamy of a vain projector, who had betrayed the king's credulity to useless expences, and risked his life in seeking countries that had no existence? how would those that had rejected his proposals have triumphed in their acuteness! and when would his name have been mentioned, but with the makers of potable gold and malleable glass?

The last royal projectors with whom the world has been troubled, were Charles of Sweden and the Czar of Muscovy. Charles, if any judgment may be formed of his designs by his measures and his enquiries, had purposed first to dethrone the Czar, then to lead his army through pathless deserts into China, thence to make his way by the sword through the whole circuit of Asia, and by the conquest of Turkey to unite Sweden with his new dominions: but this mighty project was crushed at Pultowa; and Charles has since been considered as a madman by those powers, who sent their ambassadors to solicit his friendship, and their generals "to learn under him the art of war."

The Czar found employment sufficient in his own dominions, and amused himself in digging canals, and building cities; murdering his subjects with insufferable fatigues, and transplanting nations from one corner of his dominions to another, without re-

gretting the thousands that perished on the way: but he attained his end, he made his people formidable, and is numbered by fame among the demigods.

I am far from intending to vindicate the sanguinary projects of heroes and conquerors, and would wish rather to diminish the reputation of their success, than the infamy of their miscarriages: for I cannot conceive, why he that has burnt cities, wasted nations, and filled the world with horrour and desolation, should be more kindly regarded by mankind, than he that died in the rudiments of wickedness; why he that accomplished mischief should be glorious, and he that only endeavoured it should be criminal. I would wish Cæsar and Catiline, Xerxes and Alexander, Charles and Peter, huddled together in obscurity or detestation.

But there is another species of projectors, to whom I would willingly conciliate mankind; whose ends are generally laudable, and whose labours are innocent; who are searching out new powers of nature, or contriving new works of art; but who are yet persecuted with incessant obloquy, and whom the universal contempt with which they are treated, often debars from that success which their industry would obtain, if it were permitted to act without opposition.

They who find themselves inclined to censure new undertakings, only because they are new, should consider, that the folly of projection is very seldom the folly of a fool; it is commonly the ebullition of a capacious mind, crowded with variety of knowledge,

and heated with intenseness of thought; it proceeds often from the consciousness of uncommon powers, from the confidence of those, who having already done much, are easily persuaded that they can do more. When Rowley had completed the orrery, he attempted the perpetual motion; when Boyle had exhausted the secrets of vulgar chymistry, he turned his thoughts to the work of transmutation.

A projector generally unites those qualities which have the fairest claim to veneration, extent of knowledge, and greatness of design: it was said of Catiline, "*immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta semper cupiebat.*" Projectors of all kinds agree in their intellects, though they differ in their morals; they all fail by attempting things beyond their power, by despising vulgar attainments, and aspiring to performances to which perhaps nature has not proportioned the force of man: when they fail, therefore, they fail not by idleness or timidity, but by rash adventure and fruitless diligence.

That the attempts of such men will often miscarry, we may reasonably expect; yet from such men, and such only, are we to hope for the cultivation of those parts of nature which lie yet waste, and the invention of those arts which are yet wanting to the felicity of life. If they are, therefore, universally discouraged, art and discovery can make no advances. Whatever is attempted without previous certainty of success, may be considered as a project, and amongst narrow minds may, therefore, expose its author to censure and contempt; and if the liberty of laughing be once indulged, every man will laugh at what he does not

understand, every project will be considered as madness, and every great or new design will be censured as a project. Men accustomed to reason and researches, think every enterprize impracticable, which is extended beyond common effects, or comprises many intermediate operations. Many that presume to laugh at projectors, would consider a flight through the air in a winged chariot, and the movement of a mighty engine by the steam of water as equally the dreams of mechanic lunacy; and would hear, with equal negligence, of the union of the Thames and Severn by a canal, and the scheme of Albuquerque, the viceroy of the Indies, who in the rage of hostility had contrived to make Egypt a barren desert, by turning the Nile into the Red Sea.

Those who have attempted much, have seldom failed to perform more than those who never deviate from the common roads of action: many valuable preparations of chymistry are supposed to have risen from unsuccessful enquiries after the grand elixir: it is, therefore, just to encourage those who endeavour to enlarge the power of art, since they often succeed beyond expectation; and when they fail, may sometimes benefit the world even by their miscarriages.

NUMB. 102. SATURDAY, *October* 27, 1753.

——Quid tam dextro pede concipis, ut te
Conatus non pœniteat, votique peracti? JUV.

What in the conduct of our life appears
So well design'd, so luckily begun,
But when we have our wish, we wish undone. DRYDEN.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR,

I HAVE been for many years a trader in London. My beginning was narrow, and my stock small; I was, therefore, a long time brow-beaten and despised by those, who having more money thought they had more merit than myself. I did not, however, suffer my resentment to instigate me to any mean arts of supplantation, nor my eagerness of riches to betray me to any indirect methods of gain; I pursued my business with incessant assiduity, supported by the hope of being one day richer than those who contemned me; and had, upon every annual review of my books, the satisfaction of finding my fortune increased beyond my expectation.

In a few years my industry and probity were fully recompensed, my wealth was really great, and my reputation for wealth still greater. I had large warehouses crowded with goods, and considerable sums in the publick funds; I was caressed upon the Exchange by the most eminent merchants; became the oracle of the common council; was solicited to engage in all commercial undertakings; was flattered with the hopes of becoming in a short time one of

the directors of a wealthy company, and, to complete my mercantile honours, enjoyed the expensive happiness of fining for sheriff.

Riches, you know, easily produce riches: when I had arrived to this degree of wealth, I had no longer any obstruction or opposition to fear; new acquisitions were hourly brought within my reach, and I continued for some years longer to heap thousands upon thousands.

At last I resolved to complete the circle of a citizen's prosperity by the purchase of an estate in the country, and to close my life in retirement. From the hour that this design entered my imagination, I found the fatigues of my employment every day more oppressive, and persuaded myself that I was no longer equal to perpetual attention, and that my health would soon be destroyed by the torment and distraction of extensive business. I could image to myself no happiness, but in vacant jollity, and uninterrupted leisure; nor entertain my friends with any other topic, than the vexation and uncertainty of trade, and the happiness of rural privacy.

But notwithstanding these declarations, I could not at once reconcile myself to the thoughts of ceasing to get money; and though I was every day enquiring for a purchase, I found some reason for rejecting all that were offered me; and, indeed, had accumulated so many beauties and conveniencies in my idea of the spot where I was finally to be happy, that, perhaps, the world might have been travelled over without discovery of a place which would not have been defective in some particular.

Thus I went on, still talking of retirement, and still refusing to retire; my friends began to laugh at my delays, and I grew ashamed to trifle longer with my own inclinations; an estate was at length purchased, I transferred my stock to a prudent young man who had married my daughter, went down into the country, and commenced lord of a spacious manor.

Here for some time I found happiness equal to my expectation. I reformed the old house according to the advice of the best architects, I threw down the walls of the garden, and enclosed it with palisades, planted long avenues of trees, filled a greenhouse with exotick plants, dug a new canal, and threw the earth into the old moat.

The fame of these expensive improvements brought in all the country to see the show. I entertained my visitors with great liberality, led them round my gardens, showed them my apartments, laid before them plans for new decorations, and was gratified by the wonder of some and the envy of others.

I was envied: but how little can one man judge of the condition of another! The time was now coming, in which affluence and splendour could no longer make me pleased with myself. I had built till the imagination of the architect was exhausted; I had added one convenience to another, till I knew not what more to wish or to design; I had laid out my gardens, planted my park, and completed my waterworks; and what now remained to be done? what, but to look up to turrets, of which when they were once raised I had no further use, to range over apartments where time was tarnishing the furniture, to stand by the cascade of which I scarcely now perceived the

sound, and to watch the growth of woods that must give their shade to a distant generation.

In this gloomy inactivity, is every day begun and ended: the happiness that I have been so long procuring is now at an end, because it has been procured; I wander from room to room, till I am weary of myself; I ride out to a neighbouring hill in the centre of my estate, from whence all my lands lie in prospect round me; I see nothing that I have not seen before, and return home disappointed, though I knew that I had nothing to expect.

In my happy days of business I had been accustomed to rise early in the morning; and remember the time when I grieved that the night came so soon upon me, and obliged me for a few hours to shut out affluence and prosperity. I now seldom see the rising sun, but to "tell him," with the fallen angel, "how I hate his beams." I awake from sleep as to languor or imprisonment, and have no employment for the first hour but to consider by what art I shall rid myself of the second. I protract the breakfast as long as I can, because when it is ended I have no call for my attention, till I can with some degree of decency grow impatient for my dinner. If I could dine all my life, I should be happy; I eat not because I am hungry, but because I am idle: but, alas! the time quickly comes when I can eat no longer; and so ill does my constitution second my inclination, that I cannot bear strong liquors: seven hours must then be endured before I shall sup; but supper comes at last, the more welcome as it is in a short time succeeded by sleep.

Such, Mr. Adventurer, is the happiness, the hope

of which seduced me from the duties and pleasures of a mercantile life. I shall be told by those who read my narrative, that there are many means of innocent amusement, and many schemes of useful employment, which I do not appear ever to have known; and that nature and art have provided pleasures, by which, without the drudgery of settled business, the active may be engaged, the solitary soothed, and the social entertained.

These arts, Sir, I have tried. When first I took possession of my estate, in conformity to the taste of my neighbours, I bought guns and nets, filled my kennel with dogs, and my stable with horses: but a little experience showed me, that these instruments of rural felicity would afford me few gratifications. I never shot but to miss the mark, and, to confess the truth, was afraid of the fire of my own gun. I could discover no musick in the cry of the dogs, nor could divest myself of pity for the animal whose peaceful and inoffensive life was sacrificed to our sport. I was not, indeed, always at leisure to reflect upon her danger; for my horse, who had been bred to the chase, did not always regard my choice either of speed or way, but leaped hedges and ditches at his own discretion, and hurried me along with the dogs, to the great diversion of my brother sportsmen. His eagerness of pursuit once incited him to swim a river; and I had leisure to resolve in the water, that I would never hazard my life again for the destruction of a hare.

I then ordered books to be procured, and by the direction of the vicar had in a few weeks a closet elegantly furnished. You will, perhaps, be surprised

when I shall tell you, that when once I had ranged them according to their sizes, and piled them up in regular gradations, I had received all the pleasure which they could give me. I am not able to excite in myself any curiosity after events which have been long passed, and in which I can therefore have no interest; I am utterly unconcerned to know whether Tully or Demosthenes excelled in oratory, whether Hannibal lost Italy by his own negligence or the corruption of his countrymen. I have no skill in controversial learning, nor can conceive why so many volumes should have been written upon questions, which I have lived so long and so happily without understanding. I once resolved to go through the volumes relating to the office of justice of the peace, but found them so crabbed and intricate, that in less than a month I desisted in despair, and resolved to supply my deficiencies by paying a competent salary to a skilful clerk.

I am naturally inclined to hospitality, and for some time kept up a constant intercourse of visits with the neighbouring gentlemen; but though they are easily brought about me by better wine than they can find at any other house, I am not much relieved by their conversation; they have no skill in commerce or the stocks, and I have no knowledge of the history of families or the factions of the country; so that when the first civilities are over, they usually talk to one another, and I am left alone in the midst of the company. Though I cannot drink myself, I am obliged to encourage the circulation of the glass; their mirth grows more turbulent and obstreperous; and before

their merriment is at an end, I am sick with disgust, and, perhaps reproached with my sobriety, or by some sly insinuations insulted as a cit.

Such, Mr. Adventurer, is the life to which I am condemned by a foolish endeavour to be happy by imitation; such is the happiness to which I pleased myself with approaching, and which I considered as the chief end of my cares and my labours. I toiled year after year with cheerfulness, in expectation of the happy hour in which I might be idle: the privilege of idleness is attained, but has not brought with it the blessing of tranquillity.

I am,

Yours, &c.

MERCATOR.

NUMB. 107. TUESDAY, *November* 13, 1753.

Sub judice lis est.—— HOR.

And of their vain disputings find no end. FRANCIS.

IT has been sometimes asked by those who find the appearance of wisdom more easily attained by questions than solutions, how it comes to pass, that the world is divided by such difference of opinion; and why men, equally reasonable, and equally lovers of truth, do not always think in the same manner?

With regard to simple propositions, where the terms are understood, and the whole subject is comprehended at once, there is such an uniformity of sentiment among all human beings, that, for

many ages, a very numerous set of notions were supposed to be innate, or necessarily coexistent with the faculty of reason: it being imagined, that universal agreement could proceed only from the invariable dictates of the universal parent.

In questions diffuse and compounded, this similarity of determination is no longer to be expected. At our first sally into the intellectual world, we all march together along one straight and open road; but as we proceed further, and wider prospects open to our view, every eye fixes upon a different scene; we divide into various paths, and, as we move forward, are still at a greater distance from each other. As a question becomes more complicated and involved, and extends to a greater number of relations, disagreement of opinion will always be multiplied; not because we are irrational, but because we are finite beings, furnished with different kinds of knowledge, exerting different degrees of attention, one discovering consequences which escape another, none taking in the whole concatenation of causes and effects, and most comprehending but a very small part, each comparing what he observes with a different criterion, and each referring it to a different purpose.

Where, then, is the wonder, that they who see only a small part should judge erroneously of the whole? or that they, who see different and dissimilar parts, should judge differently from each other?

Whatever has various respects, must have various appearances of good and evil, beauty or deformity; thus, the gardener tears up as a weed, the plant

which the physician gathers as a medicine; and "a general," says Sir Kenelm Digby, "will look with pleasure over a plain, as a fit place on which the fate of empires might be decided in battle, which the farmer will despise as bleak and barren, neither fruitful of pasturage, nor fit for tillage."

Two men examining the same question proceed commonly like the physician and gardener in selecting herbs, or the farmer and hero looking on the plain; they bring minds impressed with different notions, and direct their enquiries to different ends; they form, therefore, contrary conclusions, and each wonders at the other's absurdity.

We have less reason to be surprised or offended when we find others differ from us in opinion, because we very often differ from ourselves. How often we alter our minds, we do not always remark; because the change is sometimes made imperceptibly and gradually, and the last conviction effaces all memory of the former: yet every man, accustomed from time to time to take a survey of his own notions, will by a slight retrospection be able to discover, that his mind has suffered many revolutions; that the same things have in the several parts of his life been condemned and approved, pursued and shunned: and that on many occasions, even when his practice has been steady, his mind has been wavering, and he has persisted in a scheme of action, rather because he feared the censure of inconstancy, than because he was always pleased with his own choice.

Of the different faces shown by the same objects, as they are viewed on opposite sides, and of the different

inclinations which they must constantly raise in him that contemplates them, a more striking example cannot easily be found than two Greek epigrammatists will afford us in their accounts of human life, which I shall lay before the reader in English prose.

Posidippus, a comick poet, utters this complaint: "Through which of the paths of life is it eligible to pass? In publick assemblies are debates and troublesome affairs: domestic privacies are haunted with anxieties; in the country is labour; on the sea is terrour: in a foreign land, he that has money must live in fear, he that wants it must pine in distress: are you married? you are troubled with suspicions; are you single? you languish in solitude; children occasion toil, and a childless life is a state of destitution: the time of youth is a time of folly, and gray hairs are loaded with infirmity. This choice only, therefore, can be made, either never to receive being, or immediately to lose it."

Such and so gloomy is the prospect, which Posidippus has laid before us. But we are not to acquiesce too hastily in his determination against the value of existence: for Metrodorus, a philosopher of Athens, has shewn, that life has pleasures as well as pains; and having exhibited the present state of man in brighter colours, draws with equal appearance of reason, a contrary conclusion.

"You may pass well through any of the paths of life. In publick assemblies are honours and transactions of wisdom; in domestick privacy is stillness and quiet: in the country are the beauties of nature; on the sea is the hope of gain: in a foreign land, he

that is rich is honoured, he that is poor may keep his poverty secret: are you married? you have a cheerful house; are you single? you are unincumbered; children are objects of affection, to be without children is to be without care: the time of youth is the time of vigour, and gray hairs are made venerable by piety. It will, therefore, never be a wise man's choice, either not to obtain existence, or to lose it; for every state of life has its felicity."

In these epigrams are included most of the questions which have engaged the speculations of the enquirers after happiness; and though they will not much assist our determinations, they may, perhaps, equally promote our quiet, by showing that no absolute determination ever can be formed.

Whether a publick station, or private life be desirable, has always been debated. We see here both the allurements and discouragements of civil employments; on one side there is trouble, on the other honour; the management of affairs is vexatious and difficult, but it is the only duty in which wisdom can be conspicuously displayed: it must then still be left to every man to choose either ease or glory; nor can any general precept be given, since no man can be happy by the prescription of another.

Thus, what is said of children by Posidippus, "that they are occasions of fatigue," and by Metrodorus, "that they are objects of affection," is equally certain; but whether they will give most pain or pleasure, must depend on their future conduct and dispositions, on many causes over which the parent can have little influence: there is, therefore room

for all the caprices of imagination, and desire must be proportioned to the hope or fear that shall happen to predominate.

Such is the uncertainty in which we are always likely to remain with regard to questions wherein we have most interest, and which every day affords us fresh opportunity to examine: we may examine, indeed, but we never can decide, because our faculties are unequal to the subject: we see a little, and form an opinion; we see more, and change it.

This inconstancy and unsteadiness, to which we must so often find ourselves liable, ought certainly to teach us moderation and forbearance towards those who cannot accommodate themselves to our sentiments: if they are deceived, we have no right to attribute their mistake to obstinacy or negligence, because we likewise have been mistaken; we may, perhaps, again change our own opinion: and what excuse shall we be able to find for aversion and malignity conceived against him, whom we shall then find to have committed no fault, and who offended us only by refusing to follow us into errour?

It may likewise contribute to soften that resentment which pride naturally raises against opposition, if we consider, that he who differs from us, does not always contradict us; he has one view of an object, and we have another; each describes what he sees with equal fidelity, and each regulates his steps by his own eyes: one man with Posidippus, looks on celibacy as a state of gloomy solitude, without a partner in joy, or a comforter in sorrow; the other considers it, with Metrodorus, as a state free from

incumbrances, in which a man is at liberty to choose his own gratifications, to remove from place to place in quest of pleasure, and to think of nothing but merriment and diversion: full of these notions one hastens to choose a wife, and the other laughs at his rashness, or pities his ignorance; yet it is possible that each is right, but that each is right only for himself.

Life is not the object of science: we see a little, very little; and what is beyond we only can conjecture. If we enquire of those who have gone before us, we receive small satisfaction; some have travelled life without observation, and some willingly mislead us. The only thought, therefore, on which we can repose with comfort, is that which presents to us the care of Providence, whose eye takes in the whole of things, and under whose direction all involuntary errours will terminate in happiness.

NUMB. 108. SATURDAY, *November* 17, 1753.

Nobis, cum simul occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetuo una dormienda. CATULLUS.

When once the short-liv'd mortal dies,
A night eternal seals his eyes. ADDISON.

IT may have been observed by every reader, that there are certain topicks which never are exhausted. Of some images and sentiments the mind of man may be said to be enamoured; it meets them, however often they occur, with the same ardour which a

lover feels at the sight of his mistress, and parts from them with the same regret when they can no longer be enjoyed.

Of this kind are many descriptions which the poets have transcribed from each other, and their successours will probably copy to the end of time; which will continue to engage, or, as the French term it, to flatter the imagination, as long as human nature shall remain the same.

When a poet mentions the spring, we know that the zephyrs are about to whisper, that the groves are to recover their verdure, the linnets to warble forth their notes of love, and the flocks and herds to frisk over vales painted with flowers: yet, who is there so insensible of the beauties of nature, so little delighted with the renovation of the world, as not to feel his heart bound at the mention of the spring?

When night overshadows a romantick scene, all is stillness, silence, and quiet; the poets of the grove cease their melody, the moon towers over the world in gentle majesty, men forget their labours and their cares, and every passion and pursuit is for a while suspended. All this we know already, yet we hear it repeated without weariness; because such is generally the life of man, that he is pleased to think on the time when he shall pause from a sense of his condition.

When a poetical grove invites us to its covert, we know that we shall find what we have already seen, a limpid brook murmuring over pebbles, a bank diversified with flowers, a green arch that excludes the sun, and a natural grot shaded with myrtles; yet

who can forbear to enter the pleasing gloom to enjoy coolness and privacy, and gratify himself once more by scenes with which nature has formed him to be delighted?

Many moral sentiments likewise are so adapted to our state, that they find approbation whenever they solicit it, and are seldom read without exciting a gentle emotion in the mind: such is the comparison of the life of man with the duration of a flower, a thought which perhaps every nation has heard warbled in its own language, from the inspired poets of the Hebrews to our own times; yet this comparison must always please, because every heart feels its justness, and every hour confirms it by example.

Such, likewise, is the precept that directs us to use the present hour, and refer nothing to a distant time, which we are uncertain whether we shall reach: this every moralist may venture to inculcate, because it will always be approved, and because it is always forgotten.

This rule is, indeed, every day enforced, by arguments more powerful than the dissertations of moralists: we see men pleasing themselves with future happiness, fixing a certain hour for the completion of their wishes, and perishing some at a greater and some at a less distance from the happy time; all complaining of their disappointments, and lamenting that they had suffered the years which heaven allowed them, to pass without improvement, and deferred the principal purpose of their lives to the time when life itself was to forsake them.

It is not only uncertain, whether, through all the casualties and dangers which beset the life of man, we

shall be able to reach the time appointed for happiness or wisdom; but it is likely, that whatever now hinders us from doing that which our reason and conscience declare necessary to be done, will equally obstruct us in times to come. It is easy for the imagination, operating on things not yet existing, to please itself with scenes of unmingled felicity, or plan out courses of uniform virtue; but good and evil are in real life inseparably united; habits grow stronger by indulgence; and reason loses her dignity, in proportion as she has oftener yielded to temptation; "he that cannot live well to-day," says Martial, "will be less qualified to live well to-morrow."

Of the uncertainty of every human good, every human being seems to be convinced; yet this uncertainty is voluntarily increased by unnecessary delay, whether we respect external causes, or consider the nature of our own minds. He that now feels a desire to do right, and wishes to regulate his life according to his reason, is not sure that, at any future time assignable, he shall be able to rekindle the same ardour; he that has now an opportunity offered him of breaking loose from vice and folly, cannot know, but that he shall hereafter be more entangled, and struggle for freedom without obtaining it.

We are so unwilling to believe any thing to our own disadvantage, that we will always imagine the perspicacity of our judgment and the strength of our resolution more likely to increase than to grow less by time; and, therefore, conclude, that the will to pursue laudable purposes, will be always seconded by the power.

But, however we may be deceived in calculating

the strength of our faculties, we cannot doubt the uncertainty of that life in which they must be employed: we see every day the unexpected death of our friends and our enemies, we see new graves hourly opened for men older and younger than ourselves, for the cautious and the careless, the dissolute and the temperate, for men who like us were providing to enjoy or improve hours now irreversibly cut off: we see all this, and yet, instead of living, let year glide after year in preparations to live.

Men are so frequently cut off in the midst of their projections, that sudden death causes little emotion in them that behold it, unless it be impressed upon the attention by uncommon circumstances. I, like every other man, have outlived multitudes, have seen ambition sink in its triumphs, and beauty perish in its bloom; but have been seldom so much affected as by the fate of Euryalus, whom I lately lost as I began to love him.

Euryalus had for some time flourished in a lucrative profession; but having suffered his imagination to be fired by an unextinguishable curiosity, he grew weary of the same dull round of life, resolved to harass himself no longer with the drudgery of getting money, but to quit his business and his profit, and enjoy for a few years the pleasures of travel. His friends heard him proclaim his resolution without suspecting that he intended to pursue it: but he was constant to his purpose, and with great expedition closed his accounts and sold his moveables, passed a few days in bidding farewell to his companions, and with all the eagerness of romantic chivalry crossed the sea in search of hap-

piness. Whatever place was renowned in ancient or modern history, whatever region art or nature had distinguished, he determined to visit: full of design and hope he landed on the continent; his friends expected accounts from him of the new scenes that opened in his progress, but were informed in a few days, that Euryalus was dead.

Such was the end of Euryalus. He is entered that state whence none ever shall return; and can now only benefit his friends, by remaining to their memories a permanent and efficacious instance of the blindness of desire, and the uncertainty of all terrestrial good. But perhaps, every man has like me lost an Euryalus, has known a friend die with happiness in his grasp; and yet every man continues to think himself secure of life, and defers to some future time of leisure what he knows it will be fatal to have finally omitted.

It is, indeed, with this as with other frailties inherent in our nature; the desire of deferring to another time, what cannot be done without endurance of some pain, or forbearance of some pleasure, will, perhaps, never be totally overcome or suppressed; there will always be something that we shall wish to have finished, and be nevertheless unwilling to begin: but against this unwillingness it is our duty to struggle, and every conquest over our passions will make way for an easier conquest: custom is equally forcible to bad and good; nature will always be at variance with reason, but will rebel more feebly as she is oftener subdued.

The common neglect of the present hour is more shameful and cirminal, as no man is betrayed to it by errour, but admits it by negligence. Of the instability of life, the weakest understanding never thinks wrong, though the strongest often omits to think justly: reason and experience are always ready to inform us of our real state; but we refuse to listen to their suggestions, because we feel our hearts unwilling to obey them: but, surely, nothing is more unworthy of a reasonable being, than to shut his eyes, when he sees the road which he is commanded to travel, that he may deviate with fewer reproaches from himself; nor could any motive to tenderness, except the consciousness that we have all been guilty of the same fault, dispose us to pity those who thus consign themselves to voluntary ruin.

NUMB. 111. TUESDAY, *November* 27, 1753.

——— *Quæ non fecimus ipsi,*
Vix ea nostra voco. OVID.

The deeds of long descended ancestors
Are but by grace of imputation ours. DRYDEN.

THE evils inseparably annexed to the present condition of man, are so numerous and afflictive, that it has been, from age to age, the task of some to bewail, and of others to solace them; and he, therefore, will be in danger of seeing a common enemy, who shall attempt to depreciate the few pleasures and felicities which nature has allowed us.

Yet I will confess, that I have sometimes employed my thoughts in examining the pretensions that are made to happiness, by the splendid and envied condition of life; and have not thought the hour unprofitably spent, when I have detected the imposture of counterfeit advantages, and found disquiet lurking under false appearances of gaiety and greatness.

It is asserted by a tragick poet, that "*est miser nemo nisi comparatus*," "no man is miserable, but as he is compared with others happier than himself:" this position is not strictly and philosophically true. He might have said, with rigorous propriety, that no man is happy but as he is compared with the miserable; for such is the state of this world, that we find in it absolute misery, but happiness only comparative; we may incur as much pain as we can possibly endure, though we can never obtain as much happiness as we might possibly enjoy.

Yet it is certain likewise, that many of our miseries are merely comparative: we are often made unhappy, not by the presence of any real evil, but by the absence of some fictitious good; of something which is not required by any real want of nature, which has not in itself any power of gratification, and which neither reason nor fancy would have prompted us to wish, did we not see it in the possession of others.

For a mind diseased with vain longings after unattainable advantages, no medicine can be prescribed, but an impartial enquiry into the real worth of that which is so ardently desired. It is well known, how

much the mind, as well as the eye, is deceived by distance; and, perhaps, it will be found, that of many imagined blessings it may be doubted, whether he that wants or possesses them has more reason to be satisfied with his lot.

The dignity of high birth and long extraction, no man, to whom nature has denied it, can confer upon himself; and, therefore, it deserves to be considered, whether the want of that which can never be gained, may not easily be endured. It is true, that if we consider the triumph and delight with which most of those recount their ancestors who have ancestors to recount, and the artifices by which some who have risen to unexpected fortune endeavour to insert themselves into an honourable stem, we shall be inclined to fancy that wisdom or virtue may be had by inheritance, or that all the excellencies of a line of progenitors are accumulated on their descendant. Reason, indeed, will soon inform us, that our estimation of birth is arbitrary and capricious, and that dead ancestors can have no influence but upon imagination; let it then be examined, whether one dream may not operate in the place of another; whether he that owes nothing to forefathers, may not receive equal pleasure from the consciousness of owing all to himself; whether he may not, with a little meditation, find it more honourable to found than to continue a family, and to gain dignity than transmit it; whether, if he receives no dignity from the virtues of his family, he does not likewise escape the danger of being disgraced by their crimes; and whether he that brings a new name into the world,

has not the convenience of playing the game of life without a stake, and opportunity of winning much though he has nothing to lose.

There is another opinion concerning happiness, which approaches much more nearly to universality, but which may, perhaps, with equal reason be disputed. The pretensions to ancestral honours many of the sons of earth easily see to be ill-grounded; but all agree to celebrate the advantage of hereditary riches, and to consider those as the minions of fortune, who are wealthy from their cradles, whose estate is "*res non parta labore, sed relicta;*" "the acquisition of another, not of themselves;" and whom a father's industry has dispensed from a laborious attention to arts or commerce, and left at liberty to dispose of life as fancy shall direct them.

If every man were wise and virtuous, capable to discern the best use of time, and resolute to practise it, it might be granted, I think, without hesitation, that total liberty would be a blessing; and that it would be desirable to be left at large to the exercise of religious and social duties, without the interruption of importunate avocations.

But, since felicity is relative, and that which is the means of happiness to one man may be to another the cause of misery, we are to consider, what state is best adapted to human nature in its present degeneracy and frailty. And, surely, to far the greater number it is highly expedient, that they should by some settled scheme of duties be rescued from the tyranny of caprice, that they should be driven on by necessity through the paths of life with

their attention confined to a stated task, that they may be less at leisure to deviate into mischief at the call of folly.

When we observe the lives of those whom an ample inheritance has let loose to their own direction, what do we discover that can excite our envy? Their time seems not to pass with much applause from others, or satisfaction to themselves: many squander their exuberance of fortune in luxury and debauchery, and have no other use of money than to inflame their passions, and riot in a wide range of licentiousness; others, less criminal indeed, but surely not much to be praised, lie down to sleep, and rise up to trifle, are employed every morning in finding expedients to rid themselves of the day, chase pleasure through all the places of publick resort, fly from London to Bath, and from Bath to London, without any other reason for changing place, but that they go in quest of company as idle and as vagrant as themselves, always endeavouring to raise some new desire, that they may have something to pursue, to rekindle some hope which they know will be disappointed, changing one amusement for another which a few months will make equally insipid, or sinking into languor and disease for want of something to actuate their bodies or exhilarate their minds.

Whoever has frequented those places, where idlers assemble to escape from solitude, knows that this is generally the state of the wealthy; and from this state it is no great hardship to be debarred. No man can be happy in total idleness: he that should

be condemned to lie torpid and motionless, "would fly for recreation," says South, "to the mines and the galleys;" and it is well, when nature or fortune find employment for those, who would not have known how to procure it for themselves.

He, whose mind is engaged by the acquisition or improvement of a fortune, not only escapes the insipidity of indifference, and the tediousness of inactivity, but gains enjoyments wholly unknown to those, who live lazily on the toil of others; for life affords no higher pleasure than that of surmounting difficulties, passing from one step of success to another, forming new wishes, and seeing them gratified. He that labours in any great or laudable undertaking, has his fatigues first supported by hope, and afterwards rewarded by joy; he is always moving to a certain end, and when he has attained it, an end more distant invites him to a new pursuit.

It does not, indeed, always happen, that diligence is fortunate; the wisest schemes are broken by unexpected accidents; the most constant perseverance sometimes toils through life without a recompense; but labour, though unsuccessful, is more eligible than idleness; he that prosecutes a lawful purpose by lawful means, acts always with the approbation of his own reason; he is animated through the course of his endeavours by an expectation which, though not certain, he knows to be just; and is at last comforted in his disappointment, by the consciousness that he has not failed by his own fault.

That kind of life is most happy which affords us most opportunities of gaining our own esteem; and

what can any man infer in his own favour from a condition to which, however prosperous, he contributed nothing, and which the vilest and weakest of the species would have obtained by the same right, had he happened to be the son of the same father?

To strive with difficulties, and to conquer them, is the highest human felicity; the next is, to strive, and deserve to conquer: but he whose life has passed without a contest, and who can boast neither success nor merit, can survey himself only as a useless filler of existence; and if he is content with his own character, must owe his satisfaction to insensibility.

Thus it appears that the satirist advised rightly, when he directed us to resign ourselves to the hands of Heaven, and to leave to superiour powers the determination of our lot:

> *Permittes ipsis expendere Numinibus, quid*
> *Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris:*
> *Carior est illis homo quam sibi.*
>
> Intrust thy fortune to the Pow'rs above:
> Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
> What their unerring wisdom sees thee want.
> In goodness as in greatness they excel:
> Ah! that we lov'd ourselves but half so well.
>
> DRYDEN.

What state of life admits most happiness, is uncertain; but that uncertainty ought to repress the petulance of comparison, and silence the murmurs of discontent.

NUMB. 115. TUESDAY, *December* 11, 1753.

Scribimus indocti doctique. HOR.

All dare to write, who can or cannot read.

THEY who have attentively considered the history of mankind, know that every age has its peculiar character. At one time, no desire is felt but for military honours; every summer affords battles and sieges, and the world is filled with ravage, bloodshed, and devastation: this sanguinary fury at length subsides, and nations are divided into factions, by controversies about points that will never be decided. Men then grow weary of debate and altercation, and apply themselves to the arts of profit; trading companies are formed, manufactures improved, and navigation extended; and nothing is any longer thought on, but the increase and preservation of property, the artifices of getting money, and the pleasures of spending it.

The present age, if we consider chiefly the state of our own country, may be styled with great propriety *The Age of Authors;* for, perhaps, there never was a time in which men of all degrees of ability, of every kind of education, of every profession and employment, were posting with ardour so general to the press. The province of writing was formerly left to those, who by study, or appearance of study, were supposed to have gained knowledge unattainable by the busy part of mankind; but in these enlightened days, every man is qualified to

instruct every other man: and he that beats the anvil, or guides the plough, not content with supplying corporal necessities, amuses himself in the hours of leisure with providing intellectual pleasures for his countrymen.

It may be observed, that of this, as of other evils, complaints have been made by every generation: but though it may, perhaps, be true, that at all times more have been willing than have been able to write, yet there is no reason for believing, that the dogmatical legions of the present race were ever equalled in number by any former period: for so widely is spread the itch of literary praise, that almost every man is an author, either in act or in purpose: has either bestowed his favours on the publick, or withholds them, that they may be more seasonably offered, or made more worthy of acceptance.

In former times, the pen, like the sword, was considered as consigned by nature to the hands of men; the ladies contented themselves with private virtues and domestick excellence; and a female writer, like a female warrior, was considered as a kind of eccentric being, that deviated, however illustriously, from her due sphere of motion, and was, therefore, rather to be gazed at with wonder, than countenanced by imitation. But as in the times past are said to have been a nation of Amazons, who drew the bow and wielded the battle-axe, formed encampments and wasted nations, the revolution of years has now produced a generation of Amazons of the pen, who with the spirit of their predecessors have set masculine tyranny at defiance, asserted their

claim to the regions of science, and seem resolved to contest the usurpations of virility.

Some, indeed, there are of both sexes, who are authors only in desire, but have not yet attained the power of executing their intentions; whose performances have not arrived at bulk sufficient to form a volume, or who have not the confidence, however impatient of nameless obscurity, to solicit openly the assistance of the printer. Among these are the innumerable correspondents of publick papers, who are always offering assistance which no man will receive, and suggesting hints that are never taken, and who complain loudly of the perverseness and arrogance of authors, lament their insensibility of their own interest, and fill the coffee-houses with dark stories of performances by eminent hands, which have been offered and rejected.

To what cause this universal eagerness of writing can be properly ascribed, I have not yet been able to discover. It is said, that every art is propagated in proportion to the rewards conferred upon it; a position from which a stranger would naturally infer, that literature was now blessed with patronage far transcending the candour or munificence of the Augustan age, that the road to greatness was open to none but authors, and that by writing alone riches and honour were to be obtained.

But since it is true, that writers, like other competitors, are very little disposed to favour one another, it is not to be expected, that at a time, when every man writes, any man will patronize; and accordingly, there is not one that I can recollect at

present, who professes the least regard for the votaries of science, invites the addresses of learned men, or seems to hope for reputation from any pen but his own.

The cause, therefore, of this epidemical conspiracy for the destruction of paper, must remain a secret: nor can I discover, whether we owe it to the influences of the constellations, or the intemperature of seasons: whether the long continuance of the wind at any single point, or intoxicating vapours exhaled from the earth, have turned our nobles and our peasants, our soldiers and traders, our men and women, all into wits, philosophers, and writers.

It is, indeed, of more importance to search out the cure than the cause of this intellectual malady; and he would deserve well of this country, who, instead of amusing himself with conjectural speculations, should find means of persuading the peer to inspect his steward's accounts, or repair the rural mansion of his ancestors, who could replace the tradesman behind his counter, and send back the farmer to the mattock and the flail.

General irregularities are known in time to remedy themselves. By the constitution of ancient Egypt, the priesthood was continually increasing, till at length there was no people beside themselves; the establishment was then dissolved, and the number of priests was reduced and limited. Thus among us, writers will, perhaps, be multiplied, till no readers will be found, and then the ambition of writing must necessarily cease.

But as it will be long before the cure is thus gra-

dually effected, and the evil should be stopped, if it be possible, before it rises to so great a height, I could wish that both sexes would fix their thoughts upon some salutary considerations, which might repress their ardour for that reputation which not one of many thousands is fated to obtain.

Let it be deeply impressed and frequently recollected, that he who has not obtained the proper qualifications of an author, can have no excuse for the arrogance of writing, but the power of imparting to mankind something necessary to be known. A man uneducated or unlettered may sometimes start a useful thought, or make a lucky discovery, or obtain by chance some secret of nature, or some intelligence of facts, of which the most enlightened mind may be ignorant, and which it is better to reveal, though by a rude and unskilful communication, than to lose for ever by suppressing it.

But few will be justified by this plea; for of the innumerable books and pamphlets that have overflowed the nation, scarce one has made any addition to real knowledge, or contained more than a transposition of common sentiments and a repetition of common phrases.

It will be naturally enquired, when the man who feels an inclination to write, may venture to suppose himself properly qualified; and, since every man is inclined to think well of his own intellect, by what test he may try his abilities, without hazarding the contempt or resentment of the publick.

The first qualification of a writer, is a perfect knowledge of the subject which he undertakes to

treat; since we cannot teach what we do not know, nor can properly undertake to instruct others while we are ourselves in want of instruction. The next requisite is, that he be master of the language in which he delivers his sentiments: if he treats of science and demonstration, that he has attained a style clear, pure, nervous, and expressive; if his topicks be probable and persuasory, that he be able to recommend them by the superaddition of elegance and imagery, to display the colours of varied diction, and pour forth the musick of modulated periods.

If it be again enquired, upon what principles any man shall conclude that he wants those powers, it may be readily answered, that no end is attained but by the proper means; he only can rationally presume that he understands a subject, who has read and compared the writers that have hitherto discussed it, familiarized their arguments to himself by long meditation, consulted the foundations of different systems, and separated truth from errour by a rigorous examination.

In like manner, he only has a right to suppose that he can express his thoughts, whatever they are, with perspicuity or elegance, who has carefully perused the best authors, accurately noted their diversities of style, diligently selected the best modes of diction, and familiarized them by long habits of attentive practice.

No man is a rhetorician or philosopher by chance. He who knows that he undertakes to write on questions which he has never studied, may without hesitation determine, that he is about to waste his own

time and that of his reader, and expose himself to the derision of those whom he aspires to instruct: he that without forming his style by the study of the best models hastens to obtrude his compositions on the publick, may be certain, that whatever hope or flattery may suggest, he shall shock the learned ear with barbarisms, and contribute, wherever his work shall be received, to the depravation of taste and the corruption of language,

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NUMB. 119. TUESDAY, *December* 25, 1753.

Latiùs regnes, avidum domando
Spiritum, quàm si Lybiam remotis
Gadibus jungas, et uterque Pœnus
Serviat uni. HOR.

By virtue's precepts to controul
The thirsty cravings of the soul,
Is over wider realms to reign
Unenvied monarch, than if Spain
You could to distant Lybia join,
And both the Carthages were thine. FRANCIS.

WHEN Socrates was asked, "which of mortal men was to be accounted nearest to the *gods* in happiness?" he answered, "that man who is in want of the fewest things."

In this answer, Socrates left it to be guessed by his auditors, whether, by the exemption from want which was to constitute happiness, he meant amplitude of possessions or contraction of desire. And, indeed, there is so little difference between them,

that Alexander the Great confessed the inhabitant of a tub the next man to the master of the world; and left a declaration to future ages, that if he was not Alexander he should wish to be Diogenes.

These two states, however, though they resemble each other in their consequence, differ widely with respect to the facility with which they may be attained. To make great acquisitions can happen to very few; and in the uncertainty of human affairs, to many it will be incident to labour without reward, and to lose what they already possess by endeavours to make it more: some will always want abilities, and others opportunities to accumulate wealth. It is therefore happy, that nature has allowed us a more certain and easy road to plenty; every man may grow rich by contracting his wishes, and by quiet acquiescence in what has been given him, supply the absence of more.

Yet so far is almost every man from emulating the happiness of the gods, by any other means than grasping at their power, that it seems to be the great business of life to create wants as fast as they are satisfied. It has been long observed by moralists, that every man squanders or loses a great part of that life, of which every man knows and deplores the shortness: and it may be remarked with equal justness, that though every man laments his own insufficiency to his happiness, and knows himself a necessitous and precarious being, incessantly soliciting the assistance of others, and feeling wants which his own art or strength cannot supply; yet there is no man, who does not, by the superaddition

of unnatural cares, render himself still more dependent; who does not create an artificial poverty, and suffer himself to feel pain for the want of that, of which, when it is gained, he can have no enjoyment.

It must, indeed, be allowed, that as we lose part of our time because it steals away silent and invisible, and many an hour is passed before we recollect that it is passing; so unnatural desires insinuate themselves unobserved into the mind, and we do not perceive that they are gaining upon us, till the pain which they give us awakens us to notice. No man is sufficiently vigilant to take account of every minute of his life, or to watch every motion of his heart. Much of our time likewise is sacrificed to custom; we trifle, because we see others trifle; in the same manner we catch from example the contagion of desire; we see all about us busied in pursuit of imaginary good, and begin to bustle in the same chace, lest greater activity should triumph over us.

It is true, that to man as a member of society, many things become necessary, which, perhaps, in a state of nature are superfluous; and that many things, not absolutely necessary, are yet so useful and convenient, that they cannot easily be spared. I will make yet a more ample and liberal concession. In opulent states, and regular governments, the temptations to wealth and rank, and to the distinctions that follow them, are such as no force of understanding finds it easy to resist.

If, therefore, I saw the quiet of life disturbed only by endeavours after wealth and honour; by solici-

tude, which the world, whether justly or not, considered as important; I should scarcely have had courage to inculcate any precepts of moderation and forbearance. He that is engaged in a pursuit, in which all mankind profess to be his rivals, is supported by the authority of all mankind in the prosecution of his design, and will, therefore, scarcely stop to hear the lectures of a solitary philosopher. Nor am I certain, that the accumulation of honest gain ought to be hindered, or the ambition of just honours always to be repressed. Whatever can enable the possessor to confer any benefit upon others, may be desired upon virtuous principles; and we ought not too rashly to accuse any man of intending to confine the influence of his acquisitions to himself.

But if we look round upon mankind, whom shall we find among those that fortune permits to form their own manners, that is not tormenting himself with a wish for something, of which all the pleasure and all the benefit will cease at the moment of attainment? One man is beggaring his posterity to build a house, which when finished he never will inhabit; another is levelling mountains to open a prospect, which, when he has once enjoyed it, he can enjoy no more; another is painting ceilings, carving wainscot, and filling his apartments with costly furniture, only that some neighbouring house may not be richer or finer than his own.

That splendour and elegance are not desirable, I am not so abstracted from life as to inculcate; but if we enquire closely into the reason for which they

are esteemed, we shall find them valued principally as evidences of wealth. Nothing, therefore, can show greater depravity of understanding, than to delight in the show when the reality is wanting; or voluntarily to become poor, that strangers may for a time imagine us to be rich.

But there are yet minuter objects and more trifling anxieties. Men may be found, who are kept from sleep by the want of a shell particularly variegated! who are wasting their lives, in stratagems to obtain a book in a language which they do not understand; who pine with envy at the flowers of another man's parterre; who hover like vultures round the owner of a fossil, in hopes to plunder his cabinet at his death; and who would not much regret to see a street in flames, if a box of medals might be scattered in the tumult.

He that imagines me to speak of these sages in terms exaggerated and hyperbolical, has conversed but little with the race of virtuosos. A slight acquaintance with their studies, and a few visits to their assemblies, would inform him, that nothing is so worthless, but that prejudice and caprice can give it value; nor any thing of so little use, but that by indulging an idle competition or unreasonable pride, a man may make it to himself one of the necessaries of life.

Desires like these, I may surely, without incurring the censure of moroseness, advise every man to repel when they invade his mind; or if he admits them, never to allow them any greater influence than is necessary to give petty employments the power of

pleasing, and diversify the day with slight amusements.

An ardent wish, whatever be its object, will always be able to interrupt tranquillity. What we believe ourselves to want, torments us not in proportion to its real value, but according to the estimation by which we have rated it in our own minds; in some diseases, the patient has been observed to long for food, which scarce any extremity of hunger would in health have compelled him to swallow; but while his organs were thus depraved, the craving was irresistible, nor could any rest be obtained till it was appeased by compliance. Of the same nature are the irregular appetites of the mind; though they are often excited by trifles, they are equally disquieting with real wants: the Roman, who wept at the death of his lamprey, felt the same degree of sorrow that extorts tears on other occasions.

Inordinate desires, of whatever kind, ought to be repressed upon yet a higher consideration; they must be considered as enemies not only to happiness but to virtue. There are men, among those commonly reckoned the learned and the wise, who spare no stratagems to remove a competitor at an auction, who will sink the price of a rarity at the expence of truth, and whom it is not safe to trust alone in a library or cabinet. These are faults, which the fraternity seem to look upon as jocular mischiefs, or to think excused by the violence of the temptation: but I shall always fear that he, who accustoms himself to fraud in little things, wants only opportunity to practise it in greater; "he that has hardened himself by killing a

sheep," says Pythagoras, "will with less reluctance shed the blood of a man."

To prize every thing according to its *real* use ought to be the aim of a rational being. There are few things which can much conduce to happiness, and, therefore, few things to be ardently desired. He that looks upon the business and bustle of the world, with the philosophy with which Socrates surveyed the fair at Athens, will turn away at last with his exclamation, "How many things are here which I do not want!"

NUMB. 120. SATURDAY, *December* 29, 1753.

——Ultima semper
Expectanda dies homini, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet. OVID.

But no frail man, however great or high,
Can be concluded blest before he die. ADDISON.

THE numerous miseries of human life have extorted in all ages an universal complaint. The wisest of men terminated all his experiments in search of happiness, by the mournful confession, that "all is vanity;" and the ancient patriarchs lamented, that "the days of their pilgrimage were few and evil."

There is, indeed, no topick on which it is more superfluous to accumulate authorities, nor any assertion of which our own eyes will more easily discover, or our sensations more frequently impress the truth,

than, that misery is the lot of man, that our present state is a state of danger and infelicity.

When we take the most distant prospect of life, what does it present us but a chaos of unhappiness, a confused and tumultuous scene of labour and contest, disappointment and defeat? If we view past ages in the reflection of history, what do they offer to our meditation but crimes and calamities? One year is distinguished by a famine, another by an earthquake; kingdoms are made desolate, sometimes by wars, and sometimes by pestilence; the peace of the world is interrupted at one time by the caprices of a tyrant, at another by the rage of the conqueror. The memory is stored only with vicissitudes of evil; and the happiness, such as it is, of one part of mankind, is found to arise commonly from sanguinary success, from victories which confer upon them the power, not so much of improving life by any new enjoyment, as of inflicting misery on others, and gratifying their own pride by comparative greatness.

But by him that examines life with a more close attention, the happiness of the world will be found still less than it appears. In some intervals of publick prosperity, or to use terms more proper, in some intermissions of calamity, a general diffusion of happiness may seem to overspread a people; all is triumph and exultation, jollity and plenty; there are no publick fears and dangers, and "no complainings in the streets." But the condition of individuals is very little mended by this general calm: pain and malice and discontent still continue their havock; the silent depredation goes incessantly for-

ward; and the grave continues to be filled by the victims of sorrow.

He that enters a gay assembly, beholds the cheerfulness displayed in every countenance, and finds all sitting vacant and disengaged, with no other attention than to give or to receive pleasure, would naturally imagine, that he had reached at last the metropolis of felicity, the place sacred to gladness of heart, from whence all fear and anxiety were irreversibly excluded. Such, indeed, we may often find to be the opinion of those, who from a lower station look up to the pomp and gaiety which they cannot reach: but who is there of those who frequent these luxurious assemblies, that will not confess his own uneasiness, or cannot recount the vexations and distresses that prey upon the lives of his gay companions?

The world, in its best state, is nothing more than a larger assembly of beings, combining to counterfeit happiness which they do not feel, employing every art and contrivance to embellish life, and to hide their real condition from the eyes of one another.

The species of happiness most obvious to the observation of others, is that which depends upon the goods of fortune; yet even this is often fictitious. There is in the world more poverty than is generally imagined; not only because many whose possessions are large have desires still larger, and many measure their wants by the gratifications which others enjoy: but great numbers are pressed by real necessities which it is their chief ambition to conceal, and are forced to purchase the appearance of competence and cheer-

fulness at the expence of many comforts and conveniencies of life.

Many, however, are confessedly rich, and many more are sufficiently removed from all danger of real poverty: but it has been long ago remarked, that money cannot purchase quiet; the highest of mankind can promise themselves no exemption from that discord or suspicion, by which the sweetness of domestick retirement is destroyed; and must always be even more exposed, in the same degree as they are elevated above others, to the treachery of dependents, the calumny of defamers, and the violence of opponents.

Affliction is inseparable from our present state; it adheres to all the inhabitants of this world, in different proportions indeed, but with an allotment which seems very little regulated by our own conduct. It has been the boast of some swelling moralists, that every man's fortune was in his own power, that prudence supplied the place of all other divinities, and that happiness is the unfailing consequence of virtue. But, surely, the quiver of Omnipotence is stored with arrows, against which the shield of human virtue, however adamantine it has been boasted, is held up in vain: we do not always suffer by our crimes; we are not always protected by our innocence.

A good man is by no means exempt from the danger of suffering by the crimes of others; even his goodness may raise him enemies of implacable malice and restless perseverance: the good man has never been warranted by Heaven from the treachery of friends, the disobedience of children, or the disho-

nesty of a wife; he may see his cares made useless by profusion, his instructions defeated by perverseness, and his kindness rejected by ingratitude; he may languish under the infamy of false accusations, or perish reproachfully by an unjust sentence.

A good man is subject, like other mortals, to all the influences of natural evil; his harvest is not spared by the tempest, nor his cattle by the murrain; his house flames like others in a conflagration; nor have his ships any peculiar power of resisting hurricanes: his mind, however elevated, inhabits a body subject to innumerable casualties, of which he must always share the dangers and the pains; he bears about him the seeds of disease, and may linger away a great part of his life under the tortures of the gout or stone; at one time groaning with insufferable anguish, at another dissolved in listlessness and languor.

From this general and indiscriminate distribution of misery, the moralists have always derived one of their strongest moral arguments for a future state; for since the common events of the present life happen alike to the good and bad, it follows from the justice of the Supreme Being, that there must be another state of existence, in which a just retribution shall be made, and every man shall be happy and miserable according to his works.

The miseries of life may, perhaps, afford some proof of a future state, compared as well with the mercy as the justice of God. It is scarcely to be imagined that Infinite Benevolence would create a being capable of enjoying so much more than is here

to be enjoyed, and qualified by nature to prolong pain by remembrance, and anticipate it by terrour, if he was not designed for something nobler and better than a state, in which many of his faculties can serve only for his torment; in which he is to be importuned by desires that never can be satisfied, to feel many evils which he had no power to avoid, and to fear many which he shall never feel: there will surely come a time, when every capacity of happiness shall be filled, and none shall be wretched but by his own fault.

In the mean time, it is by affliction chiefly that the heart of man is purified, and that the thoughts are fixed upon a better state. Prosperity, allayed and imperfect as it is, has power to intoxicate the imagination, to fix the mind upon the present scene, to produce confidence and elation, and to make him who enjoys affluence and honours forget the hand by which they were bestowed. It is seldom that we are otherwise, than by affliction, awakened to a sense of our own imbecility, or taught to know how little all our acquisitions can conduce to safety or to quiet; and how justly we may ascribe to the superintendence of a higher Power, those blessings which in the wantonness of success we considered as the attainments of our policy or courage.

Nothing confers so much ability to resist the temptations that perpetually surround us, as an habitual consideration of the shortness of life, and the uncertainty of those pleasures that solicit our pursuit; and this consideration can be inculcated only by affliction. "O Death! how bitter is the remem-

brance of thee, to a man that lives at ease in his possessions!" If our present state were one continued succession of delights, or one uniform flow of calmness and tranquillity, we should never willingly think upon its end; death would then surely surprise us as "a thief in the night;" and our task of duty would remain unfinished, till "the night came when no man can work."

While affliction thus prepares us for felicity, we may console ourselves under its pressures, by remembering, that they are no particular marks of divine displeasure; since all the distresses of persecution have been suffered by those, "of whom the world was not worthy;" and the Redeemer of mankind himself was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief!"

NUMB. 126. SATURDAY, *January* 19, 1754.

——— *Steriles nec legit arenas*
Ut caneret paucis, mersitque hoc pulvere verum. LUCAN.

Canst thou believe the vast eternal Mind
Was e'er to Syrts and Libyan sands confin'd?
That he would choose this waste, this barren ground,
To teach the thin inhabitants around,
And leave his truth in wilds and deserts drown'd?

THERE has always prevailed among that part of mankind that addict their minds to speculation, a propensity to talk much of the delights of retirement; and some of the most pleasing compositions produced

in every age contain descriptions of the peace and happiness of a country life.

I know not whether those who thus ambitiously repeat the praises of solitude, have always considered, how much they depreciate mankind by declaring, that whatever is excellent or desirable is to be obtained by departing from them; that the assistance which we may derive from one another, is not equivalent to the evils which we have to fear; that the kindness of a few is overbalanced by the malice of many; and that the protection of society is too dearly purchased by encountering its dangers and enduring its oppressions.

These specious representations of solitary happiness, however opprobrious to human nature, have so far spread their influence over the world, that almost every man delights his imagination with the hopes of obtaining some time an opportunity of retreat. Many, indeed, who enjoy retreat only in imagination, content themselves with believing, that another year will transport them to rural tranquillity, and die while they talk of doing what, if they had lived longer, they would never have done. But many likewise there are, either of greater resolution or more credulity, who in earnest try the state which they have been taught to think thus secure from cares and dangers; and retire to privacy, either that they may improve their happiness, increase their knowledge, or exalt their virtue.

The greater part of the admirers of solitude, as of all other classes of mankind, have no higher or remoter view, than the present gratification of their passions. Of these, some, haughty and impetuous,

fly from society only because they cannot bear to repay to others the regard which themselves exact; and think no state of life eligible, but that which places them out of the reach of censure or controul, and affords them opportunities of living in a perpetual compliance with their own inclinations, without the necessity of regulating their actions by any other man's convenience or opinion.

There are others, of minds more delicate and tender, easily offended by every deviation from rectitude, soon disgusted by ignorance or impertinence, and always expecting from the conversation of mankind more elegance, purity, and truth, than the mingled mass of life will easily afford. Such men are in haste to retire from grossness, falsehood, and brutality; and hope to find in private habitations at least a negative felicity, an exemption from the shocks and perturbations with which publick scenes are continually distressing them.

To neither of these votaries will solitude afford that content, which she has been taught so lavishly to promise. The man of arrogance will quickly discover, that by escaping from his opponents he has lost his flatterers, that greatness is nothing where it is not seen, and power nothing where it cannot be felt: and he, whose faculties are employed in too close an observation of failings and defects, will find his condition very little mended by transferring his attention from others to himself: he will probably soon come back in quest of new objects, and be glad to keep his captiousness employed on any character rather than his own.

Others are seduced into solitude merely by the

authority of great names, and expect to find those charms in tranquillity which have allured statesmen and conquerors to the shades: these likewise are apt to wonder at their disappointment, for want of considering, that those whom they aspire to imitate carried with them to their country seats minds full fraught with subjects of reflection, the consciousness of great merit, the memory of illustrious actions, the knowledge of important events, and the seeds of mighty designs to be ripened by future meditation. Solitude was to such men a release from fatigue, and an opportunity of usefulness. But what can retirement confer upon him, who having done nothing, can receive no support from his own importance, who having known nothing can find no entertainment in reviewing the past, and who intending nothing can form no hopes from prospects of the future? He can, surely, take no wiser course than that of losing himself again in the crowd, and filling the vacuities of his mind with the news of the day.

Others consider solitude as the parent of philosophy, and retire in expectation of greater intimacies with science, as Numa repaired to the groves when he conferred with Egeria. These men have not always reason to repent. Some studies require a continued prosecution of the same train of thought, such as is too often interrupted by the petty avocations of common life: sometimes, likewise, it is necessary, that a multiplicity of objects be at once present to the mind; and every thing, therefore, must be kept at a distance, which may perplex the memory, or dissipate the attention.

But though learning may be conferred [illegible] tude, its application must be attained by [illegible] converse. He has learned to no purpose, that is not able to teach; and he will always teach unsuccessfully, who cannot recommend his sentiments by his diction or address.

Even the acquisition of knowledge is often much facilitated by the advantages of society: he that never compares his notions with those of others, readily acquiesces in his first thoughts, and very seldom discovers the objections which may be raised against his opinions; he, therefore, often thinks himself in possession of truth, when he is only fondling an error long since exploded. He that has neither companions nor rivals in his studies, will always applaud his own progress, and think highly of his performances, because he knows not that others have equalled or excelled him. And I am afraid it may be added, that the student who withdraws himself from the world, will soon feel that ardour extinguished which praise or emulation had enkindled, and take the advantage of secrecy to sleep, rather than to labour.

There remains yet another set of recluses, whose intention entitles them to higher respect, and whose motives deserve a more serious consideration. These retire from the world, not merely to bask in ease or gratify curiosity; but that being disengaged from common cares, they may employ more time in the duties of religion: that they may regulate their actions with stricter vigilance, and purify their thoughts by more frequent meditation.

To men thus elevated above the mists of mortality, I am far from presuming myself qualified to give directions. On him that appears "to pass through things temporary," with no other care than "not to lose finally the things eternal," I look with such veneration as inclines me to approve his conduct in the whole, without a minute examination of its parts; yet I could never forbear to wish, that while vice is every day multiplying seducements, and stalking forth with more hardened effrontery, virtue would not withdraw the influence of her presence, or forbear to assert her natural dignity by open and undaunted perseverance in the right. Piety practised in solitude, like the flower that blooms in the desert, may give its fragrance to the winds of Heaven, and delight those unbodied spirits that survey the works of God and the actions of men; but it bestows no assistance upon earthly beings, and however free from taints of impurity, yet wants the sacred splendour of beneficence.

Our Maker, who, though he gave us such varieties of temper and such difference of powers, yet designed us all for happiness, undoubtedly intended, that we should obtain that happiness by different means. Some are unable to resist the temptations of importunity, or the impetuosity of their own passions incited by the force of present temptations: of these it is undoubtedly the duty to fly from enemies which they cannot conquer, and to cultivate, in the calm of solitude, that virtue which is too tender to endure the tempest of publick life. But there are others, whose passions grow more strong and irregu-

lar in privacy; and who cannot maintain an uniform tenour of virtue, but by exposing their manners to the publick eye, and assisting the admonitions of conscience with the fear of infamy: for such it is dangerous to exclude all witnesses of their conduct till they have formed strong habits of virtue, and weakened their passions by frequent victories. But there is a higher order of men so inspired with ardour, and so fortified with resolution, that the world passes before them without influence or regard: these ought to consider themselves as appointed the guardians of mankind: they are placed in an evil world, to exhibit publick examples of good life: and may be said, when they withdraw to solitude, to desert the station which Providence assigned them.

NUMB. 128. SATURDAY, *January* 26, 1754.

Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit; unus utrique
Error, sed variis illudit partibus. HOR.

When in a wood we leave the certain way,
One errour fools us, though we various stray,
Some to the left, and some to t'other side. FRANCIS.

IT is common among all the classes of mankind, to charge each other with trifling away life: every man looks on the occupation or amusement of his neighbour, as something below the dignity of our nature, and unworthy of the attention of a rational being.

A man who considers the paucity of the wants of

nature, and who, being acquainted with the various means by which all manual occupations are now facilitated, observes what numbers are supported by the labour of a few, would, indeed, be inclined to wonder, how the multitudes who are exempted from the necessity of working either for themselves or others, find business to fill up the vacuities of life. The greater part of mankind neither card the fleece, dig the mine, fell the wood, nor gather in the harvest; they neither tend herds nor build houses; in what then are they employed?

This is certainly a question, which a distant prospect of the world will not enable us to answer. We find all ranks and ages mingled together in a tumultuous confusion, with haste in their motions, and eagerness in their looks; but what they have to pursue or avoid, a more minute observation must inform them.

When we analyse the crowd into individuals, it soon appears that the passions and imaginations of men will not easily suffer them to be idle: we see things coveted merely because they are rare, and pursued because they are fugitive; we see men conspire to fix an arbitrary value on that which is worthless in itself, and then contend for the possession. One is a collector of fossils, of which he knows no other use than to show them; and when he has stocked his own repository, grieves that the stones which he has left behind him should be picked up by another. The florist nurses a tulip, and repines that his rival's beds enjoy the same showers and sunshine with his own. This man is hurrying to a concert,

only lest others should have heard the new musician before him; another bursts from his company to the play, because he fancies himself the patron of an actress; some spend the morning in consultations with their tailor, and some in directions to their cook; some are forming parties for cards, and some laying wagers at a horse-race.

It cannot, I think, be denied, that some of these lives are passed in trifles, in occupations by which the busy neither benefit themselves nor others, and by which no man could be long engaged, who seriously considered what he was doing, or had knowledge enough to compare what he is with what he might be made. However, as people who have the same inclination generally flock together, every trifler is kept in countenance by the sight of others as unprofitably active as himself; by kindling the heat of competition, he in time thinks himself important, and by having his mind intensely engaged, he is secured from weariness of himself.

Some degree of self-approbation is always the reward of diligence; and I cannot, therefore, but consider the laborious cultivation of petty pleasures, as a more happy and more virtuous disposition, than that universal contempt and haughty negligence, which is sometimes associated with powerful faculties, but is often assumed by indolence when it disowns its name, and aspires to the appellation of greatness of mind.

It has been long observed, that drollery and ridicule is the most easy kind of wit: let it be added

that contempt and arrogance is the easiest philosophy. To find some objection to every thing, and to dissolve in perpetual laziness under pretence that occasions are wanting to call forth activity, to laugh at those who are ridiculously busy without setting an example of more rational industry, is no less in the power of the meanest than of the highest intellects.

Our present state has placed us at once in such different relations, that every human employment, which is not a visible and immediate act of goodness, will be in some respect or other subject to contempt; but it is true, likewise, that almost every act, which is not directly vicious, is in some respect beneficial and laudable. "I often," says Bruyere, "observe from my window, two beings of erect form and amiable countenance, endowed with the powers of reason, able to clothe their thoughts in language, and convey their notions to each other. They rise early in the morning, and are every day employed till sunset in rubbing two smooth stones together, or, in other terms, in polishing marble."

"If lions could paint," says the fable, "in the room of those pictures which exhibit men vanquishing lions, we should see lions feeding upon men." If the stonecutter could have written like Bruyere, what would he have replied?

"I look up," says he, "every day from my shop, upon a man whom the idlers, who stand still to gaze upon my work, often celebrate as a wit and a philosopher. I often perceive his face clouded with care, and am told that his taper is sometimes burning at midnight. The sight of a man who works so much harder than

myself, excited my curiosity. I heard no sound of tools in his apartment, and, therefore, could not imagine what he was doing; but was told at last, that he was writing descriptions of mankind, who when he had described them would live just as they had lived before; that he sat up whole nights to change a sentence, because the sound of a letter was too often repeated: that he was often disquieted with doubts, about the propriety of a word which every body understood; that he would hesitate between two expressions equally proper, till he could not fix his choice but by consulting his friends; that he will run from one end of Paris to the other, for an opportunity of reading a period to a nice ear; that if a single line is heard with coldness and inattention, he returns home dejected and disconsolate; and that by all this care and labour, he hopes only to make a little book, which at last will teach no useful art, and which none who has it not will perceive himself to want. I have often wondered for what end such a being as this was sent into the world; and should be glad to see those who live thus foolishly, seized by an order of the government, and obliged to labour at some useful occupation."

Thus, by a partial and imperfect representation, may every thing be made equally ridiculous. He that gazed with contempt on human beings rubbing stones together, might have prolonged the same amusement by walking through the city, and seeing others with looks of importance heaping one brick upon another; or by rambling into the country, where he might observe other creatures of the same

kind driving in a piece of sharp iron into the clay, or, in the language of men less enlightened, ploughing the field.

As it is thus easy by a detail of minute circumstances to make every thing little, so it is not difficult by an aggregation of effects to make every thing great. The polisher of marble may be forming ornaments for the palaces of virtue, and the schools of science: or providing tables on which the actions of heroes and the discoveries of sages shall be recorded, for the incitement and instruction of future generations. The mason is exercising one of the principal arts by which reasoning beings are distinguished from the brute, the art to which life owes much of its safety and all its convenience, by which we are secured from the inclemency of the seasons, and fortified against the ravages of hostility; and the ploughman is changing the face of nature, diffusing plenty and happiness over kingdoms, and compelling the earth to give food to her inhabitants.

Greatness and littleness are terms merely comparative; and we err in our estimation of things, because we measure them by some wrong standard. The trifler proposes to himself only to equal or excel some other trifler, and is happy or miserable as he succeeds or miscarries: the man of sedentary desire and unactive ambition sits comparing his power with his wishes; and makes his inability to perform things impossible, an excuse to himself for performing nothing. Man can only form a just estimate of his own actions, by making his power the test of his performance, by comparing what he does with what

he can do. Whoever steadily perseveres in the exertion of all his faculties, does what is great with respect to himself; and what will not be despised by Him, who has given to all created beings their different abilities: he faithfully performs the task of life, within whatever limits his labours may be confined, or how soon soever they may be forgotten.

We can conceive so much more than we can accomplish, that whoever tries his own actions by his imagination, may appear despicable in his own eyes. He that despises for its littleness any thing really useful, has no pretensions to applaud the grandeur of his conceptions; since nothing but narrowness of mind hinders him from seeing, that by pursuing the same principles every thing limited will appear contemptible.

He that neglects the care of his family, while his benevolence expands itself in scheming the happiness of imaginary kingdoms, might with equal reason sit on a throne dreaming of universal empire, and of the diffusion of blessings over all the globe: yet even this globe is little, compared with the system of matter within our view! and that system barely something more than nonentity, compared with the boundless regions of space, to which neither eye nor imagination can extend.

From conceptions, therefore, of what we might have been, and from wishes to be what we are not, conceptions that we know to be foolish, and wishes which we feel to be vain, we must necessarily descend to the consideration of what we are. We have powers very scanty in their utmost extent, but which

in different men are differently proportioned. Suitably to these powers we have duties prescribed, which we must neither decline for the sake of delighting ourselves with easier amusements, nor overlook in idle contemplation of greater excellence or more extensive comprehension.

In order to the right conduct of our lives, we must remember, that we are not born to please ourselves. He that studies simply his own satisfaction, will always find the proper business of his station too hard or too easy for him. But if we bear continually in mind, our relation to The Father of Being, by whom we are placed in the world, and who has allotted us the part which we are to bear in the general system of life, we shall be easily persuaded to resign our own inclinations to Unerring Wisdom, and do the work decreed for us with cheerfulness and diligence.

NUMB. 131. TUESDAY, *February* 5, 1754.

——— *Misce*
Ergo aliquid nostris de moribus. JUV.

And mingle something of our times to please.
DRYDEN, Jun.

FONTENELLE, in his panegyrick on Sir Isaac Newton, closes a long enumeration of that great philosopher's virtues and attainments, with an observation, that "he was not distinguished from other men, by any singularity either natural or affected."

It is an eminent instance of Newton's superiority to the rest of mankind, that he was able to separate knowledge from those weaknesses by which knowledge is generally disgraced; that he was able to excel in science and wisdom, without purchasing them by the neglect of little things; and that he stood alone, merely because he had left the rest of mankind behind him, not because he deviated from the beaten track.

Whoever, after the example of Plutarch, should compare the lives of illustrious men, might set this part of Newton's character to view with great advantage, by opposing it to that of Bacon, perhaps the only man, of later ages, who has any pretensions to dispute with him the palm of genius or science.

Bacon, after he had added to a long and careful contemplation of almost every other object of knowledge a curious inspection into common life, and after having surveyed nature as a philosopher, had examined "men's business and bosoms" as a statesman; yet failed so much in the conduct of domestick affairs, that, in the most lucrative post to which a great and wealthy kingdom could advance him, he felt all the miseries of distressful poverty, and committed all the crimes to which poverty incites. Such were at once his negligence and rapacity, that, as it is said, he would gain by unworthy practices that money, which, when so acquired, his servants might steal from one end of the table, while he sat studious and abstracted at the other.

As scarcely any man has reached the excellence, very few have sunk to the weakness of Bacon: but

almost all the studious tribe, as they obtain any participation of his knowledge, feel likewise some contagion of his defects; and obstruct the veneration which learning would procure, by follies greater or less, to which only learning could betray them.

It has been formerly remarked by *The Guardian*, that the world punishes with too great severity the errours of those, who imagine that the ignorance of little things may be compensated by the knowledge of great; for so it is, that as more can detect petty failings than can distinguish or esteem great qualifications, and as mankind is in general more easily disposed to censure than to admiration, contempt is often incurred by slight mistakes, which real virtue or usefulness cannot counterbalance.

Yet such mistakes and inadvertencies it is not easy for a man deeply immersed in study to avoid; no man can become qualified for the common intercourses of life, by private meditation; the manners of the world are not a regular system, planned by philosophers upon settled principles, in which every cause has a congruous effect, and one part has a just reference to another. Of the fashions prevalent in every country, a few have arisen, perhaps, from particular temperatures of the climate; a few more from the constitution of the government; but the greater part have grown up by chance; been started by caprice, been contrived by affectation, or borrowed without any just motives of choice from other countries.

Of all these, the savage that hunts his prey upon the mountains, and the sage that speculates in his closet, must necessarily live in equal ignorance: yet

by the observation of those trifles it is, that the ranks of mankind are kept in order, that the address of one to another is regulated, and the general business of the world carried on with facility and method.

These things, therefore, though small in themselves, become great by their frequency: and he very much mistakes his own interest, who to the unavoidable unskilfulness of abstraction and retirement, adds a voluntary neglect of common forms, and increases the disadvantages of a studious course of life by an arrogant contempt of those practices, by which others endeavour to gain favour and multiply friendships.

A real and interiour disdain of fashion and ceremony, is indeed, not very often to be found: much the greater part of those who pretend to laugh at foppery and formality, secretly wish to have possessed those qualifications which they pretend to despise; and because they find it difficult to wash away the tincture which they have so deeply imbibed, endeavour to harden themselves in a sullen approbation of their own colour. Neutrality is a state, into which the busy passions of man cannot easily subside; and he who is in danger of the pangs of envy, is generally forced to recreate his imagination with an effort of comfort.

Some, however, may be found, who, supported by the consciousness of great abilities, and elevated by a long course of reputation and applause, voluntarily consign themselves to singularity, affect to cross the roads of life because they know that they shall not be jostled, and indulge a boundless gratification of will because they perceive that they shall be quietly obey-

ed. Men of this kind are generally known by the name of Humourists, an appellation by which he that has obtained it, and can be contented to keep it, is set free at once from the shackles of fashion: and can go in or out, sit or stand, be talkative or silent, gloomy or merry, advance absurdities or oppose demonstration, without any other reprehension from mankind, than that it is his way, that he is an odd fellow, and must be let alone.

This seems to many an easy passport through the various factions of mankind; and those on whom it is bestowed, appear too frequently to consider the patience with which their caprices are suffered as an undoubted evidence of their own importance, of a genius to which submission is universally paid, and whose irregularities are only considered as consequences of its vigour. These peculiarities, however, are always found to spot a character, though they may not totally obscure it; and he who expects from mankind, that they should give up established customs in compliance with his single will, and exacts that deference which he does not pay, may be endured, but can never be approved.

Singularity is, I think, in its own nature universally and invariably displeasing. In whatever respect a man differs from others, he must be considered by them as either worse or better: by being better, it is well known that a man gains admiration oftener than love, since all approbation of his practice must necessarily condemn him that gives it; and though a man often pleases by inferiority, there are few who desire to give such pleasure. Yet the truth is, that

singularity is almost always regarded as a brand of slight reproach; and where it is associated with acknowledged merit, serves as an abatement or an allay of excellence, by which weak eyes are reconciled to its lustre, and by which, though kindness is not gained, at least envy is averted.

But let no man be in haste to conclude his own merit so great or conspicuous, as to require or justify singularity: it is as hazardous for a moderate understanding to usurp the prerogatives of genius, as for a common form to play over the airs of uncontested beauty. The pride of men will not patiently endure to see one, whose understanding or attainments are but level with their own, break the rules by which they have consented to be bound, or forsake the direction which they submissively follow. All violation of established practice implies in its own nature a rejection of the common opinion, a defiance of common censure, and an appeal from general laws to private judgment: he, therefore, who differs from others without apparent advantage, ought not to be angry if his arrogance is punished with ridicule; if those whose example he superciliously overlooks, point him out to derision, and hoot him back again into the common road.

The pride of singularity is often exerted in little things, where right and wrong are indeterminable, and where, therefore, vanity is without excuse. But there are occasions on which it is noble to dare to stand alone. To be pious among infidels, to be disinterested in a time of general venality, to lead a life of virtue and reason in the midst of sensualists,

is a proof of a mind intent on nobler things than the praise or blame of men, of a soul fixed in the contemplation of the highest good, and superiour to the tyranny of custom and example.

In moral and religious questions only, a wise man will hold no consultations with fashion, because these duties are constant and immutable, and depend not on the notions of men, but the commands of Heaven: yet even of these, the external mode is to be in some measure regulated by the prevailing taste of the age in which we live; for he is certainly no friend to virtue, who neglects to give it any lawful attraction, or suffers it to deceive the eye or alienate the affections for want of innocent compliance with fashionable decorations.

It is yet remembered of the learned and pious Nelson, that he was remarkably elegant in his manners, and splendid in his dress. He knew, that the eminence of his character drew many eyes upon him; and he was careful not to drive the young or the gay away from religion, by representing it as an enemy to any distinction or enjoyment in which human nature may innocently delight.

In this censure of singularity, I have, therefore, no intention to subject reason or conscience to custom or example. To comply with the notions and practices of mankind, is in some degree the duty of a social being; because by compliance only he can please, and by pleasing only he can become useful: but as the end is not to be lost for the sake of the means, we are not to give up virtue to complaisance; for the end of complaisance is only to

gain the kindness of our fellow beings, whose kindness is desirable only as instrumental to happiness, and happiness must be always lost by departure from virtue.

NUMB. 137. TUESDAY, *February* 26, 1754.

Τι δ' ἔρεξα; PYTH.

What have I been doing?

AS man is a being very sparingly furnished with the power of prescience, he can provide for the future only by considering the past; and as futurity is all in which he has any real interest, he ought very diligently to use the only means by which he can be enabled to enjoy it, and frequently to revolve the experiments which he has hitherto made upon life, that he may gain wisdom from his mistakes, and caution from his miscarriages.

Though I do not so exactly conform to the precepts of Pythagoras, as to practise every night this solemn recollection, yet I am not so lost in dissipation as wholly to omit it; nor can I forbear sometimes to enquire of myself, in what employment my life has passed away. Much of my time has sunk into nothing, and left no trace by which it can be distinguished; and of this I now only know, that it was once in my power, and might once have been improved.

Of other parts of life, memory can give some ac-

count; at some hours I have been gay, and at others serious; I have sometimes mingled in conversation, and sometimes meditated in solitude; one day has been spent in consulting the ancient sages, and another in writing *Adventurers*.

At the conclusion of any undertaking, it is usual to compute the loss and profit. As I shall soon cease to write *Adventurers*, I could not forbear lately to consider what has been the consequence of my labours; and whether I am to reckon the hours laid out in these compositions, as applied to a good and laudable purpose, or suffered to fume away in useless evaporations.

That I have intended well, I have the attestation of my own heart: but good intentions may be frustrated when they are executed without suitable skill, or directed to an end unattainable in itself.

Some there are, who leave writers very little room for self-congratulation; some who affirm, that books have no influence upon the publick, that no age was ever made better by its authors, and that to call upon mankind to correct their manners, is, like Xerxes, to scourge the wind, or shackle the torrent.

This opinion they pretend to support by unfailing experience. The world is full of fraud and corruption, rapine or malignity; interest is the ruling motive of mankind, and every one is endeavouring to increase his own stores of happiness by perpetual accumulation, without reflecting upon the numbers whom his superfluity condemns to want: in this state of things a book of morality is published, in which charity and benevolence are strongly inforced; and

it is proved beyond opposition, that men are happy in proportion as they are virtuous, and rich as they are liberal. The book is applauded, and the author is preferred; he imagines his applause deserved, and receives less pleasure from the acquisition of reward than the consciousness of merit. Let us look again upon mankind: interest is still the ruling motive, and the world is yet full of fraud and corruption, malevolence and rapine.

The difficulty of confuting this assertion, arises merely from its generality and comprehension; to overthrow it by a detail of distinct facts, requires a wider survey of the world than human eyes can take; the progress of reformation is gradual and silent, as the extension of evening shadows; we know that they were short at noon, and are long at sunset, but our senses were not able to discern their increase: we know of every civil nation, that it was once savage, and how was it reclaimed but by a precept and admonition?

Mankind are universally corrupt, but corrupt in different degrees; as they are universally ignorant, yet with greater or less irradiations of knowledge. How has knowledge or virtue been increased and preserved in one place beyond another, but by diligent inculcation and rational inforcement?

Books of morality are daily written, yet its influence is still little in the world; so the ground is annually ploughed, and yet multitudes are in want of bread. But, surely, neither the labours of the moralist nor of the husbandman are vain: let them for a while neglect their tasks, and their usefulness

will be known; the wickedness that is now frequent would become universal, the bread that is now scarce would wholly fail.

The power, indeed, of every individual is small, and the consequence of his endeavours imperceptible, in a general prospect of the world. Providence has given no man ability to do much, that something might be left for every man to do. The business of life is carried on by a general co-operation; in which the part of any single man can be no more distinguished, than the effect of a particular drop when the meadows are floated by a summer shower: yet every drop increases the inundation, and every hand adds to the happiness or misery of mankind.

That a writer, however zealous or eloquent, seldom works a visible effect upon cities or nations, will readily be granted. The book which is read most, is read by few, compared with those that read it not; and of those few, the greater part peruse it with dispositions that very little favour their own improvement.

It is difficult to enumerate the several motives which procure to books the honour of perusal: spite, vanity, and curiosity, hope and fear, love and hatred, every passion which incites to any other action, serves at one time or other to stimulate a reader.

Some are fond to take a celebrated volume into their hands, because they hope to distinguish their penetration, by finding faults which have escaped the publick; others eagerly buy it in the first bloom of reputation, that they may join the chorus of praise,

and not lag, as Falstaff terms it, in "the rearward of the fashion."

Some read for style, and some for argument: one has little care about the sentiment, he observes only how it is expressed; another regards not the conclusion, but is diligent to mark how it is inferred: they read for other purposes than the attainment of practical knowledge; and are no more likely to grow wise by an examination of a treatise of moral prudence, than an architect to inflame his devotion by considering attentively the proportions of a temple.

Some read that they may embellish their conversation, or shine in dispute; some that they may not be detected in ignorance, or want the reputation of literary accomplishments: but the most general and prevalent reason of study is the impossibility of finding another amusement equally cheap or constant, equally independent on the hour or the weather. He that wants money to follow the chase of pleasure through her yearly circuit, and is left at home when the gay world rolls to Bath or Tunbridge; he whose gout compels him to hear from his chamber the rattle of chariots transporting happier beings to plays and assemblies, will be forced to seek in books a refuge from himself.

The author is not wholly useless, who provides innocent amusements for minds like these. There are, in the present state of things, so many more instigations to evil, than incitements to good, that he who keeps men in a neutral state, may be justly considered as a benefactor to life.

But, perhaps, it seldom happens, that study ter-

minates in mere pastime. Books have always a secret influence on the understanding; we cannot at pleasure obliterate ideas: he that reads books of science, though without any fixed desire of improvement, will grow more knowing; he that entertains himself with moral or religious treatises, will imperceptibly advance in goodness; the ideas which are often offered to the mind, will at last find a lucky moment when it is disposed to receive them.

It is, therefore, urged without reason, as a discouragement to writers, that there are already books sufficient in the world; that all the topicks of persuasion have been discussed, and every important question clearly stated and justly decided; and that, therefore, there is no room to hope, that pigmies should conquer where heroes have been defeated, or that the petty copiers of the present time should advance the great work of reformation, which their predecessors were forced to leave unfinished.

Whatever be the present extent of human knowledge, it is not only finite, and therefore in its own nature capable of increase; but so narrow, that almost every understanding may, by a diligent application of its powers, hope to enlarge it. It is, however, not necessary, that a man should forbear to write, till he has discovered some truth unknown before; he may be sufficiently useful, by only diversifying the surface of knowledge, and luring the mind by a new appearance to a second view of those beauties which it had passed over inattentively before. Every writer may find intellects correspondent to his own, to whom his expressions are familiar

and his thoughts congenial; and, perhaps, truth is often more successfully propagated by men of moderate abilities, who, adopting the opinions of others, have no care but to explain them clearly, than by subtle speculatists and curious searchers, who exact from their readers powers equal to their own, and if their fabricks of science be strong, take no care to render them accessible.

For my part, I do not regret the hours which I have laid out in these little compositions. That the world has grown apparently better, since the publication of the *Adventurer*, I have not observed; but am willing to think, that many have been affected by single sentiments, of which it is their business to renew the impression; that many have caught hints of truth, which it is now their duty to pursue; and that those who have received no improvement, have wanted not opportunity but intention to improve.

NUMB. 138. SATURDAY, *March* 2, 1754.

Quid purè tranquillet? honos, an dulce lucellum,
An secretum iter, et fallentis semita vitæ? HOR.

Whether the tranquil mind and pure,
Honours or wealth our bliss insure:
Or down through life unknown to stray,
Where lonely leads the silent way. FRANCIS.

HAVING considered the importance of authors to the welfare of the publick, I am led by a natural train of thought, to reflect on their condition with regard to themselves; and to enquire what degree of

happiness or vexation is annexed to the difficult and laborious employment of providing instruction or entertainment for mankind.

In estimating the pain or pleasure of any particular state, every man, indeed, draws his decisions from his own breast, and cannot with certainty determine whether other minds are affected by the same causes in the same manner. Yet by this criterion we must be content to judge, because no other can be obtained; and, indeed, we have no reason to think it very fallacious, for excepting here and there an anomalous mind, which either does not feel like others, or dissembles its sensibility, we find men unanimously concur in attributing happiness or misery to particular conditions, as they agree in acknowledging the cold of winter and the heat of autumn.

If we apply to authors themselves for an account of their state, it will appear very little to deserve envy; for they have in all ages been addicted to complaint. The neglect of learning, the ingratitude of the present age, and the absurd preference by which ignorance and dulness often obtain favour and rewards, have been from age to age topicks of invective; and few have left their names to posterity, without some appeal to future candour from the perverseness and malice of their own times.

I have, nevertheless, been often inclined to doubt, whether authors, however querulous, are in reality more miserable than their fellow mortals. The present life is to all a state of infelicity; every man, like an author, believes himself to merit more than he

obtains, and solaces the present with the prospect of the future; others, indeed, suffer those disappointments in silence, of which the writer complains, to show how well he has learnt the art of lamentation.

There is at least one gleam of felicity, of which few writers have missed the enjoyment: he whose hopes have so far overpowered his fears, as that he has resolved to stand forth a candidate for fame, seldom fails to amuse himself, before his appearance, with pleasing scenes of affluence or honour; while his fortune is yet under the regulation of fancy, he easily models it to his wish, suffers no thoughts of criticks or rivals to intrude upon his mind, but counts over the bounties of patronage, or listens to the voice of praise.

Some there are, that talk very luxuriously of the second period of an author's happiness, and tell of the tumultuous raptures of invention, when the mind riots in imagery, and the choice stands suspended between different sentiments.

These pleasures, I believe, may sometimes be indulged to those, who come to a subject of disquisition with minds full of ideas, and with fancies so vigorous, as easily to excite, select, and arrange them. To write is, indeed, no unpleasing employment, when one sentiment readily produces another, and both ideas and expressions present themselves at the first summons; but such happiness, the greatest genius does not always obtain; and common writers know it only to such a degree, as to credit its possibility. Composition is, for the most part, an effort of slow

diligence and steady perseverance, to which the mind is dragged by necessity or resolution, and from which the attention is every moment starting to more delightful amusements.

It frequently happens, that a design which, when considered at a distance, gave flattering hopes of facility, mocks us in the execution with unexpected difficulties; the mind which, while it considered it in the gross, imagined itself amply furnished with materials, finds sometimes an unexpected barrenness and vacuity, and wonders whither all those ideas are vanished, which a little before seemed struggling for emission.

Sometimes many thoughts present themselves; but so confused and unconnected, that they are not without difficulty reduced to method, or concatenated in a regular and dependent series; the mind falls at once into a labyrinth, of which neither the beginning nor end can be discovered, and toils and struggles without progress or extrication.

It is asserted by Horace, that, "if matter be once got together, words will be found with very little difficulty;" a position which, though sufficiently plausible to be inserted in poetical precepts, is by no means strictly and philosophically true. If words were naturally and necessarily consequential to sentiments, it would always follow, that he who has most knowledge must have most eloquence, and that every man would clearly express what he fully understood: yet we find, that to think, and discourse, are often the qualities of different persons: and many books might surely be produced, where just and noble

sentiments are degraded and obscured by unsuitable diction.

Words, therefore, as well as things, claim the care of an author. Indeed of many authors, and those not useless or contemptible, words are almost the only care: many make it their study, not so much to strike out new sentiments, as to recommend those which are already known to more favourable notice by fairer decorations: but every man, whether he copies or invents, whether he delivers his own thoughts or those of another, has often found himself deficient in the power of expression, big with ideas which he could not utter, obliged to ransack his memory for terms adequate to his conceptions, and at last unable to impress upon his reader the image existing in his own mind.

It is one of the common distresses of a writer, to be within a word of a happy period, to want only a single epithet to give amplification its full force, to require only a correspondent term in order to finish a paragraph with elegance, and make one of its members answer to the other: but these deficiencies cannot always be supplied: and after a long study and vexation, the passage is turned anew, and the web unwoven that was so nearly finished.

But when thoughts and words are collected and adjusted, and the whole composition at last concluded, it seldom gratifies the author, when he comes coolly and deliberately to review it, with the hopes which had been excited in the fury of the performance: novelty always captivates the mind; as our thoughts rise fresh upon us, we readily believe them

just and original, which, when the pleasure of production is over, we find to be mean and common, or borrowed from the works of others, and supplied by memory rather than invention.

But though it should happen that the writer finds no such faults in his performance, he is still to remember, that he looks upon it with partial eyes: and when he considers, how much men who could judge of others with great exactness, have often failed of judging of themselves, he will be afraid of deciding too hastily in his own favour, or of allowing himself to contemplate with too much complacence, treasure that has not yet been brought to the test, nor passed the only trial that can stamp its value.

From the publick, and only from the publick, is he to await a confirmation of his claim, and a final justification of self-esteem; but the publick is not easily persuaded to favour an author. If mankind were left to judge for themselves, it is reasonable to imagine, that of such writings, at least, as describe the movements of the human passions, and of which every man carries the archetype within him, a just opinion would be formed; but whoever has remarked the fate of books, must have found it governed by other causes than general consent arising from general conviction. If a new performance happens not to fall into the hands of some who have courage to tell, and authority to propagate their opinion, it often remains long in obscurity, and perishes unknown and unexamined. A few, a very few, commonly constitute the taste of the time; the judgment which they have once pronounced, some are too lazy to discuss,

and some too timorous to contradict; it may however be, I think, observed, that their power is greater to depress than exalt, as mankind are more credulous of censure than of praise.

This perversion of the publick judgment is not to be rashly numbered amongst the miseries of an author; since it commonly serves, after miscarriage, to reconcile him to himself. Because the world has sometimes passed an unjust sentence, he readily concludes the sentence unjust by which his performance is condemned; because some have been exalted above their merits by partiality, he is sure to ascribe the success of a rival, not to the merit of his work, but the zeal of his patrons. Upon the whole, as the author seems to share all the common miseries of life, he appears to partake likewise of its lenitives and abatements.

END OF THE ELEVENTH VOLUME.

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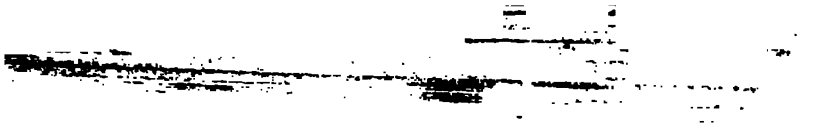

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